

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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Summer 1991 Volume 61 Number 3



IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other materials relating to birds and bird finding in Iowa should be sent to the editor. Accepted manuscripts will generally be published promptly, depending on space available, with the following absolute deadlines: 15 November for the Winter issue; 15 February for the Spring issue; 15 May for the Summer issue; and 15 July for the Fall issue. Most manuscripts will be refereed. All material should be typed double-spaced or hand printed in ink on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. Manuscripts may also be submitted on computer disks formatted in Word 4.0 for the Macintosh. If submitting a disk, please also include a printed copy of the manuscript. Authors should pattern their style after a current issue of the journal. If you want more detailed guidelines or advice regarding the appropriateness of your topic for *Iowa Bird Life*, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor.

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS OF IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

\* 15-17 May 1992 Cedar Rapids

## FIELD REPORTS

Anyone observing birds in Iowa is encouraged to report their findings on a quarterly basis to the Field Reports editors. Sample reporting and documentation forms suitable for duplication are available from the editor (send self-addressed stamped envelope to Jim Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010). An article describing the reporting process is also available.

Deadlines for receipt of field reports are as follows:

- \* Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb)--3 March (W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653)
- \* Spring (Mar, Apr, May)--3 June (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)
- \* Summer (Jun, Jul)--3 August (James J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010)
- \* Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov)--3 December (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

\*Deadline for receipt of reports: 15 January. For forms and instructions write: W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653.

## IOWA BIRDLINE 319-338-9881

The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Jim Fuller checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night. Significant sightings should also be reported in writing to the Field Reports editor for that season of the year.

## I.O.U. NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editors (Hank and Linda Zaletel, 715 West St., Colo, IA 50056).

## MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The following materials may be obtained by writing the editorial office (Iowa Bird Life, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010):

- \*Order form for back issues of *Iowa Bird Life*: send self-addressed stamped envelope.
- \*Field Checklist of Iowa Birds--1987 Edition: 10 for \$1.65, 25 for \$3.50, 100 for \$11.60, postpaid. Also available at annual meetings for \$0.10 each. Temporarily out of stock; new checklists should be available early in 1992.

## REPORTING NEBRASKA BIRDS

Sightings of Nebraska birds, including those within the Nebraska portion of DeSoto N.W.R., should be reported to Loren and Babs Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, NE 68005. Formats for reporting and documentation are the same as for Iowa. The Nebraska Bird Line, available 24 hours a day, is 402-292-5325. Iowa birders are encouraged to report their Nebraska sightings to this number.

## ADDRESS CHANGES

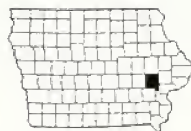
Please send address changes/corrections to Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265.

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# A COUNTY BIG YEAR

THOMAS H. KENT

Many birders like to play games that involve finding species of birds in defined areas over defined periods of time. Games are a strong motivator of human behavior and tend to stimulate research, planning, and intensive activity. Personally, I get much more out of my birding activities if I have a plan or game involved. For 1990, I chose a project for which I could make maximum use of the time available and for which I could best use my own abilities. I set out to find as many species as possible in Johnson County in one year.



My first step in planning was to divide potential species into four categories and then estimate the number of each that I was likely to find: (1) expect to see, most without any special effort (181 species, all of which I should see); (2) good chance to see (35 of 52 species); (3) possible, but unlikely (10 of 46 species); (4) outside possibility (2 of 15 species). My goal was set for 228 species. Next, I plotted my available time against the dates that I could look for the 98 species in categories 2 and 3. This gave me a month-by-month plan for species to look for. In order to add additional intensity to my efforts, I planned for a Big Day each month (two in May) and a week's vacation in May at the peak of migration. After the year began I added an additional goal: to drive all of the roads in the county.

January started out well. On a Big Day, alone, I found 45 species including six owls, six waterfowl, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Harris' Sparrow. During the rest of January and February, I covered about three-fourths of the roads and was rewarded by finding Northern Goshawk, Northern Shrike, and Gray Partridge. The latter species turned out to be present in all quadrants of the county. Intensive efforts to find Common Redpoll failed, but others (Tom Shires, Chuck Fuller) discovered Red and White-winged crossbills near my office in the Medical Laboratories.

March also started out with a bang when I found a Ross' Goose with Greater White-fronted Geese near the Coralville Reservoir dam. Late in the month, high water brought large concentrations of waterfowl including Tundra Swan, American Black Duck, and Greater Scaup. An early Franklin's Gull and Lesser Golden-Plover were a welcome sight, and a large flock of Smith's Longspurs returned to the same field they were in the previous two years.

After a Big Day on 31 March, I went out on the afternoon of 1 April to look for and found Loggerhead Shrike and Brewer's Blackbird, the latter a difficult bird to find in Johnson County. On 7 April, I took a long, dull walk to Sand Point and was rewarded when a Sandhill Crane flew over. On 14 April, I finally flushed a Winter Wren after many hours of searching. On 15 April, my son-in-law's two dogs helped me flush a Le Conte's Sparrow from a grassy field. I usually find the sparrow in late April, but this year I would be birding in Texas at that time. On 16 April, it was raining when I got home from work, but I went out anyway and was rewarded with my first Osprey, American White Pelican, and Cattle Egret. My sister called about a wounded Cooper's Hawk the day before I was to leave for Texas, so after checking it out, I took her to the reservoir where we found 14 American Avocets and to Lake Macbride where we found three Eared Grebes.

May is usually my big birding month, and this year was no exception. I found 192 species in the county during the month. Some of the more unusual ones were

Western Grebe, Clay-colored Sparrow, Northern Mockingbird (several locations), Ruddy Turnstone, Mississippi Kite, Alder Flycatcher, Connecticut Warbler, Prairie Warbler, and Peregrine Falcon. By the end of May, my year's list for Johnson County stood at 234 species, 6 more than my original goal. I set a new goal of 240 and reset my time priorities for the species that remained.

Summer is usually slow for new species, and I have less birding time. I added no new species in either June or July and only one in August, Little Blue Heron on the first. Water levels, which had been at flood levels in June and July, began to fall in August, leading to excellent fall habitat for shorebirds and herons.

Birding picked up in September, which turned out to be spectacular even though I took an 8-day birding trip to Newfoundland. Francis Moore and I found 104 species on 1 September, including Sanderling, which was new for the year. On the 2nd, when a passing car disturbed my shorebird watching, I noticed warblers moving in the roadside bushes. The first one in my binocular was a Black-throated Blue Warbler, only my second one for the state (another was in my yard later in the month). Encouraged by the warbler movement, I went to Oakland Cemetery to look in the conifers for Cape May Warbler. Just as I was about to leave, I found two of them when I stopped to look at a flock of Chipping Sparrows. Later that same day, Jim Fuller reported Buff-breasted Sandpiper, which I was able to find the next morning. On the 8th, I added Snowy Egret, Red-necked Phalarope, and American Bittern at the Coralville Reservoir; a Merlin was there early the next morning. On the 22nd, I finally found my first American Pipit. One afternoon Jim Fuller suggested that we look for Sharp-tailed Sparrow. I picked the spot that seemed most likely and sure enough, it was there along with my two missing sure-fire species (Virginia Rail and Sedge Wren) as a bonus. Twelve new species for September brought my total to 246. Was 250 possible?

In October I had planned to look for rare diving ducks at the end of the month, but the warm weather delayed the migration to November. The excellent water conditions at the Coralville Reservoir, however, produced the most spectacular finds of the year. After a Big Day on the 13th, which included a Western Sandpiper, I went out on the 14th to look over the Pectoral Sandpipers with the remote hope of finding a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. Much to my surprise, I found a likely candidate and confirmed the field marks after it flew to a nearby pond. Fortunately, it was relocated late in the day and seen by many people. On the 27th, I listened to the second half of the Iowa football game while watching gulls at Babcock Access. I was about to leave when I saw a first-year gull that I thought would be my first Herring Gull of the fall, but repeated study over the next two hours convinced me that it was a first-year California Gull, a species that I had been able to study the week before in California. The bird was seen by many the next day. I was now at 250 for the year.

The first weekend in November produced one of the most spectacular fall fronts that I can remember. On Friday the 2nd, Dick Tetrault and I did a Big Day and found 10 shorebird, 10 sparrow, and 12 waterfowl species, the later heralding the first big influx of the fall. The front was stalled on Saturday with more waterfowl present. I anticipated Sunday would be better. The morning started out unexpectedly with a Red-throated Loon at the Coralville Lake dam area, and an hour later I found three White-winged Scoters at Mehaffey Bridge. The thousands of scaup were accompanied by many mergansers of all three species and all of the other common waterfowl. Even more impressive to me were 210 Common Loons in one sweep of the scope at Jolly Roger. This day also produced my luckiest bird of the year. Late in the afternoon, I was trying to relocate the Red-throated Loon for Ann Johnson and Beth

Brown, when Jim Scheib came by and told us of a Varied Thrush found by Jim Fuller at the Macbride Nature Recreation Area. After driving around and re-evaluating the directions we had, I flushed the bird off the road, but it soon flew and was not seen again. Although the rest of November had nice weather, and I searched intensively, the only other new bird for the year was Snow Bunting.

In December I continued searching for a few missing species, but was only able to add Glaucous Gull, a bird that I found at Babcock Access by watching the gull flock for several hours. That brought my year's total for Johnson County to 255 species, 27 more than I had predicted. I finished the month driving the remaining roads that I had missed.

For the year, I found all of the 181 species that I had listed as expected. More surprising was my finding 49 of 52 species that I had listed as good possibilities. These are birds that I do not encounter every year, but with intensive effort and good water conditions I was able to find almost all of them. Among the possible, but unlikely species I found 19 of 46. As predicted, I got 2 of 15 outside possibilities (Varied Thrush, Prairie Warbler), but also added four accidental species that I had not listed (Mississippi Kite, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, California Gull, and Red-throated Loon).

There were 30 species that I saw only once (or the same bird over 1 to 3 days). Eight of these were found during my many trips (sometimes two or three in one day) to Babcock Access and would have been missed without persistent coverage. Several of these single sightings occurred when I made an attempt to overcome negative thinking. "There is nothing at Sand Point and it is a long walk" (Sandhill Crane). "Sandy Beach is a long drive and it is almost supper time" (Western Grebe). "I have not seen anything at Macbride lately" (Eared Grebe). Other sightings were due to a strong hunch and previous experience: White-winged Scoter with first big influx of diving ducks, Alder Flycatcher and Connecticut Warbler in Hickory Hill Park in late May, Cape May Warbler in conifers in fall. Some, but relatively few species were found by others (both crossbills, Prairie Warbler, Varied Thrush).

I was lucky to have an excellent year for shorebird and waterfowl habitat and good waves of warblers in both spring and fall. The year was only average for winter finches and rare waterfowl. I covered several large wooded tracts in an effort to find several species known to nest in wooded areas near Johnson County (Amana Woods and Palisades-Kepler State Park), but I could not find Acadian Flycatcher, Worm-eating Warbler, and Hooded Warbler and had only single sightings of Cerulean Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush. My biggest miss was Yellow-breasted Chat, a bird often found in Hickory Hill Park. A pair was found at William's Prairie by Jim Fuller, but when I got there they were gone.

The biggest side effect of my Big Year in Johnson County, besides having a lot of fun in a relaxed atmosphere, was creating some new lists. I reviewed all my daily field lists back to 1949 and my father's notes (F. W. Kent kept a birding diary from 1949 to 1973) in order to create my county list, my list of early and late dates for Iowa, and my newly created monthly lists for Iowa. In Johnson County in 1990, I added two species to my state list (Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, California Gull). Five of 7 new species for my Johnson County list appear to be first records for the county (Red-throated Loon, Ross' Goose, Mississippi Kite, California Gull, and Varied Thrush). I saw 44 birds in months that I had not seen them before in Iowa. Personally for the state, I had 9 new early and 19 new late spring dates; 18 new early and 30 new late fall dates; and 24 new first calendar and 44 last calendar dates. Record early or late dates for the state included 3 first, 6 second, and 1 third.

County birding can be a lot of fun. Time can be used efficiently, because distances are not great. I can get to the best birding spots in 5 to 20 minutes. This makes early morning and late evening birding feasible. One of the most satisfying aspects of a county Big Year was that I found almost all of the birds myself. Included were many species I consider rare in the county and four accidental species. Although I have birded Johnson County all of my life, I found some good spots that I was unfamiliar with or had not visited in many years.

Dick Tetrault was my most frequent companion, especially on Big Days. Jim Fuller got me out several afternoons and kept me informed of what others were finding. Carl Bendorf and Francis Moore helped me with Big Days. Ken Lowder (an audiologist) lent me his ear in the deep woods for a couple of important finds. I thank these people and others who I met in the field during the year. My wife Ann was very supportive on the home front. The combination of goal setting and ease of access to local birding spots got me into the field a lot for relaxed, enjoyable birding that produced a number of good finds.

*211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246*



*Figure 2. Road along the west side of Little Wall Lake. The road is now Highway 69 and the trees in the background are in the Hamilton County park. Photograph taken in 1916 and currently in photo collection at the Iowa Department of Transportation, Ames.*

# BIRDING LITTLE WALL AND ANDERSON LAKES AND TEIG'S MARSH

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE AND HANK ZALETEL

Little Wall and Anderson lakes in Hamilton County and Teig's Marsh in Story County are typical of the prairie pothole habitat that covered central and north-central Iowa before this region was settled. These areas are not home to a great diversity of birds, although more than 230 species have been recorded here in the last 10 years. Some of the better finds include Pacific Loon, Red-necked and Western grebes, Little Blue Heron, ibis species, Oldsquaw, Black Scoter, Common Moorhen, Sandhill Crane, Pine Warbler, and Prothonotary Warbler.

Begin at the intersection of highways 69 and 175 in the center of Jewell (see Figure 1). Drive east on highway 175 for approximately 1.0 mi and turn left (north) on the first gravel road. Continue north on this road for 0.4 mi. Anderson Lake (1), formerly known as Goose Lake, is west of the road. The best viewing is from the shoulder of the road. This is a 135-acre, privately owned marsh and trespassing is not permitted. Migration is the best time to visit this area. Summer birding is best when water levels are high. Breeding species include Pied-billed Grebe, Least Bittern, Green-backed Heron, American Coot, Marsh Wren, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. Sora, Virginia Rail, Ring-necked Duck and Common Moorhen nest here some years. For a better view of the south end of the marsh, return to the railroad tracks located immediately north of Highway 175 (2). You can park along the shoulder of the road and follow the tracks west for approximately 0.2 mi. This is the best place to see migrating waterfowl and herons. American White Pelican and Virginia Rail are seen here occasionally. When water levels are low (usually every 2-3 years), a wide variety of shorebirds may be seen here, including Black-bellied Plover, Hudsonian Godwit, and Wilson's Phalarope. Bell's Vireo may breed in the scrubby areas along the railroad tracks. Winter birding is often very slow, although Short-eared Owl may occasionally

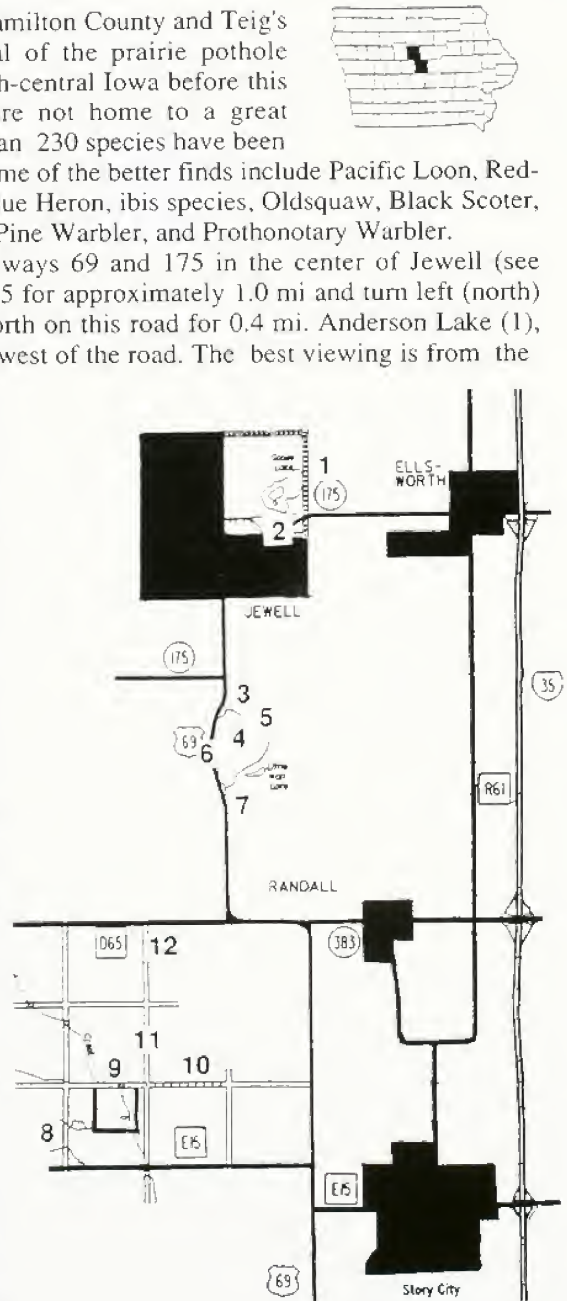


Figure 1. Map of the Little Wall and Anderson lake area. Numbers refer to areas discussed in text.

be seen foraging over the marsh during November-February.

Return to highway 175, turn right and proceed back to its intersection with highway 69 in Jewell. At that intersection, turn left (south) and drive 2.3 miles to the north edge of Little Wall Lake. This 273-acre lake was a typical prairie marsh until 1961 when the water level was raised to provide better boating and fishing. Turn left into the entrance to the Hamilton County park (3) along the north edge of the lake. Follow the gravel road east past the beach and boathouse and along the north end of the lake to a marshy cove at the northeast end of the lake (4). This area affords close views of waterfowl during migration. Herons, including Great Egret and Black-crowned Night-Heron, are occasionally seen here during migration. Continue south along the east shore of the lake to a parking area (5). From here you can scan a large section of the lake, including a closer view of the east end of the lake. The trees along the north shore of the lake to your east are often good for migrating passerines.

Return to highway 69 and turn left (south). Drive south for 0.4 miles to a pulloff on your left along the shore of the lake (6). From this location, you have an excellent view of most of the lake. Look for loons, grebes, and waterfowl during migration. Eared Grebe and American White Pelican are seen regularly during April and May. Osprey are occasionally seen flying over the lake during April-May. Fall migration is better, though, with Eared and Horned grebes, Tundra Swan, and all three species of scoters being seen in recent years.

Return to highway 69, turn left (south), and proceed for 0.2 miles to the entrance to the boat ramp at the southwest corner of the lake (7). The sheltered cove east of the boat ramp is good for ducks, as well as shorebirds if water levels are low. The trees along the parking lot often have Rusty Blackbirds during migration, especially during March and April.

The two lakes provide an interesting contrast. Originally both were prairie marshes typical of north-central and northwestern Iowa. Figures 2 and 3 show Little Wall Lake in its original form. In late 1961, the water level in Little Wall Lake was raised by about 5 feet and most of the emergent vegetation was flooded out. Since then, this lake has had little emergent vegetation and has been mostly open water. It receives heavy boat traffic from late spring through fall and as a result bird use is reduced in those seasons. In contrast, water levels have not been altered at Anderson Lake. In dry years it is completely dry but it still functions as a prairie marsh with most species typical of that habitat.

Return to highway 69, turn left (south) and drive 5.5 miles to county road E15. Turn right onto county road E15 and drive west for 3 miles. Almost the entire section on the right (north) is either pasture, marsh, or grassland. During migration, this area attracts numerous migrating raptors and shrikes. Turn right (north) and drive north for 0.5 miles. Stop near the two bridges (8). To your right (east) is the largest wetland on the area, this one being privately owned by the Teig family. The area is not accessible to the public but usually you can see most of the wetland from the road. During migration, ducks and geese occur here and during the late afternoon hours of winter (November-March), Short-eared Owls are often seen flying over the area or perched on fence posts.

Continue north and turn right at the next intersection. Just before the bridge (9) on your right there is a 80-acre area recently purchased by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Approximately 20 acres at the south end of the property is marshy and about 5 acres is open water, including several small gravel pits. Yellow-headed Blackbird, Mallard, and Wood Duck are found here during the nesting season. Great Horned Owls are often found in the cottonwoods just south of the road.

Continue east to the next intersection. During wet periods, the dirt road that continues east is not passable. If the road appears passable, go east for 0.5 miles. There is a wet area (10) on the north side of the road that is good for waterfowl and shorebirds. Return to the intersection, turn right, and proceed north for 0.5 miles (11). There are wet areas on both sides of the road that often have waterfowl and shorebirds during migration. Continue north to county road D65. Just before you reach the blacktop, there is a large low area (12) that is often flooded during wet periods. If flooded, check the area for waterfowl and shorebirds. At D65, turn right and drive 1 mile to the intersection with highway 69. This completes your tour of these three areas.

*4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010 and 715 West St., Colo, IA 50056*



*Figure 3. West shoreline of Little Wall Lake looking east across the lake. Note the emergent vegetation in the foreground, a plant community largely eliminated when the water level was raised in 1961. Photograph taken in 1916 and currently in photo collection at the Iowa Department of Transportation, Ames.*

## MEET TWO IOWA BIRDERS: EUGENE AND ELOISE ARMSTRONG

BOB CECIL

No words are spoken when Eugene Armstrong starts his pickup each morning for a drive around the "block" to check out its birds. Eloise, his wife of more than 40 years hops in, and they begin their seven-mile circuit past Badger Creek Recreation Area and lots of farm fields. They can show you detailed records of each day's finds which, over the years, have become an accurate calendar of the arrival and departure of migratory species in central Iowa. The days with the worst species total? The second and third week of January. The days with the best species total? This doesn't require even a moment's consideration. "May 10th, 11th, and 12th" answers Eugene.

Eugene's interest in birding began as a child. His initial interest was sparked and fostered by two elementary teachers who taught three years of classes in nature study. Miss Holl and Miss Padley, using Audubon's *Birds of America*, taught bird identification to their students. Eugene excelled. He was given the opportunity to identify the bird in the picture only if the other students couldn't. Eugene's dad also encouraged his son. Giving in to his son's appeals, he finally brought home a 2-power binocular costing \$7 (Eugene still has the binoculars), a sizeable sum in those days. Eugene also recalls the time his father pointed out a prairie-chicken near their home in Booneville, probably one of the last ones in that part of Iowa, and the only one Eugene has ever seen in Iowa.



*Eugene and Eloise Armstrong*

Eugene's first vivid memory of a bird occurred in 1940 when a Scarlet Tanager landed on the window sill of his church one Sunday morning. "I can still see it," he states, adding that he forgot the sermon, but he never forgot the bird. His ongoing interest in birds has given him an interesting historical perspective, of which some is positive and some not. As a child running a trapline, he recalls clapping his hands in a hayfield and flushing 12-15 Short-eared Owls, birds that have now been gone from there for years. He also remembers seeing vast flocks of ducks and geese migrating through central Iowa. While the same species are still present, the numbers are much reduced, victims of overhunting and habitat destruction. On a more positive note, he recalls when farmers shot "chicken hawks." "That's turned around now," he observes, citing the increased numbers and greater understanding of these raptors.

Eloise is the other half of this unpretentious pair of Iowa birders. She was born in Calhoun County near the town of Lake City where, she points out, there is no lake. After moving to Adel while in the 8th grade, her family moved to Van Meter when she was a sophomore. She met Eugene here, and four years later they married and moved into the house where they still live. Here she raised four sons and two nephews, presumably with a little help from her spouse.

In addition to the responsibilities of being a farm wife, Eloise finds time to satisfy the appetites of birds coming to their feeders, maintained from October to April each year. In their yard, up to 250 goldfinches consume as much as 50 pounds of niger seed each week. In addition to goldfinches, Eloise reports that the feeders have also attracted Sharp-shinned Hawks, American Kestrels, and Northern Shrikes, birds evidently less interested in the feeders than the feeder's birds. According to Eloise, the most unusual find was a flock of Snow Buntings that appeared one winter.

Eugene and Eloise's involvement in birding organizations began in 1972 when together they joined the Des Moines Audubon Society, the same year Eugene started a life list that would take them all over North America. Eloise, still busy with the kids, didn't get hers underway until 1978, the year they joined the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. They have been active in both organizations. Eugene was elected to the I.O.U. Board of Directors in 1986 and remained on the board until his eligibility expired in 1990, when Eloise replaced him. Eugene was elected to the Records Committee in 1990. In the Des Moines Audubon Society, Eugene has served on the Board of Directors from 1978 to 1990 and is currently President, and Eloise is currently the Secretary. Eugene has also served as field trip chairman for the past 11 years and has led some 100 trips for the organization. Together, they also compile the Des Moines Christmas Bird Count, about which Eloise observes that Eugene does the listing and she does the work.

While farming up to 1,000 acres near their home, Eugene and Eloise remain active birders even though the busiest times for farming-spring and fall-are also the best times for birding. "We're Iowa birders," declares Eugene. In 1988, they went for a big year, driving 18,000 miles without leaving the state. Traveling together, their lists are remarkably similar, always within one or two species of one another. Each year, they visit all four corners of the state where, they point out, one can see 33 species not normally found in central Iowa. They are also aggressive chasers. At the ring of the telephone, they are off chasing any rarity that wanders into the state. So far in 1991, they have gone after Barn Owl (found), Laughing Gull (seen), Red Phalarope (missed), Western Tanager (seen), Black-necked Stilt (seen), and others.

Although they do a big year nearly every year, their exploits are not limited to the Hawkeye State. Over the years, they have assisted in three Christmas counts in Alamo, Mexico, visited southeastern Arizona seven times, birded the Rio Grande

Valley and the Colorado Rockies four times, Churchill, Manitoba twice, as well as trips to the New England coast, Florida, Hawaii, Washington, and Michigan for the Kirtland's Warbler. Eloise keeps meticulous records, keeping track not only of birds seen, but also miles traveled, motels where they stayed, and first sightings of lizards, tarantulas, mammals, and other diverse information.

If you don't already know the Armstrongs, watch for them at any I.O.U. meeting or, better yet, have, say, a Rosy Finch show up at your feeder. Figure travel time from Booneville at 60 miles per hour, more or less, and you'll get to meet one of Iowa's outstanding birding teams.

*1315 41st St., Des Moines, IA 50311*



*A group of Des Moines Audubon Club members watching Northern Rough-winged Swallows over Greenwood Lake. From left to right Albert Berkowitz, Mrs. Toni Wendelburg, and Jean Gessell. Photo undated but taken sometime between 1943 and 1948.*

# A HISTORY OF THE DES MOINES AUDUBON CLUB

## PART II. 1938-1950

HANK ZALATEL

In most organizations, a turnover of officers, board members and committee heads occurs every five to ten years. This change strengthens the organization by providing a constant infusion of energy and talent. By 1938, many of the charter and early members of the Des Moines Audubon were no longer active. Several had moved away and others, because of poor health or other reasons, had relinquished their leadership roles. In the years 1938-1950, the Des Moines Audubon Club had an influx of new members and leadership dedicated to upholding the high standards of the club.

One of the problems encountered in writing the early history of the club was the fact that the minutes from 1923-1932 had been lost. In fact, their loss was noted in the April 1940 minutes and a search was made for them but to no avail. The May 1940 minutes made the following recommendations: "1. all records of the society be kept on file by the society historian. 2. the historian remain in service while she is a member of the organization and able to serve in that capacity. 3. a fireproof receptacle be purchased in which to file all records, newspaper clippings, and literature of the society." Thanks to their foresight, a comprehensive record of the organization has been preserved.

In April 1923, the Iowa Legislature passed a law which declared that the 21st day of March of each year is designated as Bird Day. It shall be the duty of all public schools to observe said day by devoting a part thereof to a special study of birds, their habits, usefulness, and best means of protection.

A 1933 newspaper article stated that "school programs will generally follow the line of education work on the value of all birds in preying upon insect life and the check on weed growth by consuming large quantities of weed seed."

Des Moines Audubon members responded by assembling exhibits, giving talks, and preparing study guides for teachers. For example, on 21 March 1933, Des Moines Audubon President Anna Palas spoke on WHO radio in the morning. In the afternoon, Phil DuMont spoke to WSUI listeners at the University of Iowa while in Ames at the same time Professor George Hendrickson, another Des Moines Audubon member, spoke to listeners of WOI on game management.

From its founding, the members of the club understood that it was only through education that they could reach the youth, especially young boys who shot or robbed bird nests. Members gave many bird talks to Junior Audubon Clubs stressing the value of birds and telling how to build nest boxes, and bird feeders.

In fact as early as the summer of 1925, the club's committee on Junior Audubon had prepared a working bulletin for teachers. It listed a variety of topics for study, a guide for organizing a Junior Audubon Club, and a list of bird books in city and state libraries. At that time, more than 40 of the city's 60 schools had active clubs or devoted one period a week to bird study.

One of the principals responsible for these study guides was Mrs. Nettie Sawyer Funk. Born in Spirit Lake in 1871, she graduated from Grinnell College and taught school until 1913. In 1914, she married A. B. Funk, a politician and bureaucrat. The Funks moved to Des Moines in 1916 where they lived until her death in 1934.

In 1931, she published two booklets to assist bird students. *Methods of Bird Study* (50 cents) was designed for teachers and students who could work independently. It contained points to note when observing birds: size, color, markings, vocalizations, behavior, feeding habits, flight, where found, and other peculiarities. Her second booklet *Bird Study Field Book* (25 cents) contained forms that could be filled out during and after field observations.

Upon her death, it was her desire that her ornithological library be left to the Des Moines Audubon Club. Because the club had no permanent meeting place, the books were given to the Des Moines Public Library. Each volume contained a book plate furnished by the club stating that the volume had been donated by Mrs. Funk.

Despite all of the club's educational efforts, a few never received the message. Olivia McCabe, the club's historian noted there was a continual problem of boys and their guns. She complained that on field trips, rather than hearing singing birds, all they heard was the sound of guns.

At the January 1940 meeting, Captain Tom Pettitt of the Police Department told the group that it was difficult for the police to find which boys had guns, slings, or air rifles, and who was indulging in illegal fishing. He suggested that if members saw children carrying these weapons, they should report them to the Police Department which would be glad to apprehend the culprits.

Olivia McCabe was a charter member of the Des Moines Audubon and the club's first historian. She wrote an annotated chronology of the club's early history in the *Warbler*, the club's newsletter, in the mid 1940's. She resided in Des Moines for 75 years and was employed as a librarian in the Des Moines library system for 42 years. She died in 1962 at the age of 85.

Olivia McCabe, in writing her historical chronology, based much of the early history on her memory. Some of these recollections were wrong. The vertical file at the Des Moines Public Library and a summary of the club's activities published yearly in the December issue of *Bird Lore* helped verify names, places, and dates.

The conservation committee, consisting of Mrs. John Stewart, Kate LaMar, Margo Frankel, and Janet DuMont, was very active keeping the club informed on the policies of the State Game Commission and legislative measures needing the club's support. Likewise, the legislative committee made up of Howard Bump, Arthur Palas, John Stewart, and Dwight Smith attended many legislative sessions and stressed the Audubon point of view, particularly the club's opposition to dove and quail hunting.

One of the better-known members of the Des Moines Audubon was Arie den Boer. Born in Gouda, Holland in 1897, he worked in several nurseries in Europe before coming to Des Moines in 1923. In 1928 he was hired by the Des Moines Waterworks to maintain and beautify the grounds. It was quite natural, then, that he would join the Audubon Club since their first sanctuary was located there. During the 1930's, he chaired the exhibit committee and, with his help, the club won many prizes at horticulture and garden club shows. In addition to being an avid Christmas



*Olivia McCabe*

count participant, he also served as vice president and as a member of the conservation committee.

In order to further beautify the park's grounds, he suggested to the Waterwork's board that crab apples be planted because of their hardiness and adaptability to the Iowa climate. The arboretum now has several thousand trees and 300 varieties attracting thousands of visitors each spring. By 1959, den Boer was recognized as the world expert on crab apple trees. That year he wrote *Ornamental Crab Apples* which was published by the American Association of Nurserymen, the first book the association had ever published.



Arie den Boer

During his career, he won eight major awards including the medal of honor from the Garden Club of America in 1961, its highest horticultural award. Den Boer retired from the Waterworks in September 1961 after 33 years of service. He and his wife planned to tour Europe for a year before returning to Iowa. In October 1961 he suffered a heart attack aboard the S.S. Rotterdam on the Atlantic and died.

Before his death he told an interviewer "No city would survive very long if beauty were left to itself to develop. No city can make a sound growth unless it keeps in mind the development of beauty."

At the September 1940 meeting, Janetta DuMont reported that the fence erected at Brenton Slough to protect nesting waterbirds, had been bent back, and that cattle were trampling this area and grazing there." The caretaker for the estate was contacted to take care of the matter.

One of the recommendations of the executive committee in September 1941 was to appoint a constitution committee to submit a constitution permitting a non-profit corporation. This would protect the members from legal liability and grant the club the tax advantages of a non-profit corporation. At the September general meeting the club authorized the president to appoint a committee to rewrite the constitution. Former president and attorney Howard Bump was appointed chair with Gertrude Cromwell, Dr. Arthur Becker, and Dwight Smith rounding out the committee.

No record exists of when the new constitution was adopted or when the non-profit corporation was registered. However, at the September 1942 meeting, Howard Bump was asked to clarify the club's status as a corporation. Apparently all matters pertaining to this situation had been resolved. The cover of the 1943 yearbook states that the club was incorporated in 1942.

In February 1942, the executive committee was authorized to purchase war bonds with available Audubon funds. At the next meeting it was reported that the club would be able to buy two \$100 war bonds and two \$25 bonds.

The booklet *The Birds of Polk County* was published in 1931 with much fanfare and high expectation of wide distribution. While no record remains of how many copies were printed, sales, nevertheless, were disappointing. In fact, the May 1936 minutes tell of outgoing President Janetta DuMont's dismay at the failure to sell many copies of the book and the resulting lack of income from sales. It was decided to send complimentary copies to park officials, custodians, and game wardens.

By April 1941, much of the information in the book was dated. The club, however, still had in stock many copies which they had not been able to sell. The

minutes reveal that a decision was made to send complimentary copies to all schools in Polk County and to sell the remainder for 25 cents each.

With the outbreak of World War II, the nature of birding changed. According to Joe Brown, wartime gas rationing made it difficult to reach most birding areas except for those adjacent to streetcar routes. Physicians with automobiles had extra gasoline allotments (the 'c' ration cards). People like the Peasleys were crucial to birders working the outlying areas like Brenton Slough. The Peasleys were gracious and sharing people in this regard."

When rationing ended, areas such as western Iowa and spring waterfowl stopovers again were accessible (over two-lane hilly highways) to Audubon members. The Peasleys, Ruth Binsfield, and Gladys Haskell were very active at this time. They had cars and were at an advantage when gas reappeared.

Binoculars used by members were based on World War I designs and were often 8x25. LeMaire, Chevalier, Ross, Zeiss, Hensoldt, Wollensak, and Bausch and Lomb were the common manufacturers. Joe Brown remembers that some members used the little 3 or 4 power opera type non-prismatic glasses.

For identification purposes, Chester A. Reed's *Bird Guide* and Frank M. Chapman's *Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America* were used until 1934 when *A Field Guide to the Birds* was published by Roger Tory Peterson. In 1949, the *Audubon Land Bird Guide* was published and was followed in 1951 by the *Audubon Water, Game and Large Land Bird Guide*. These volumes supplemented Peterson's field guide. Dr. Thomas S. Robert's two-volume *The Birds of Minnesota* was also used because of the similarity of Minnesota's and Iowa's birds.

Toni Wendelburg, speaking about the war in 1943, noted that in normal times, bird study offered little more than the sheer pleasure of learning about birds and their habits. With the world at war, however, Audubon Society members were pointing out that membership in the organization might be an advantage for men about to be inducted in the army. Long hikes were good pre-induction toughening up practice. Looking for birds relieves the tedium of road work and at the same time develops the powers of observation. The man whose eye is trained to spot the Blackburnian Warbler may well be much quicker at noticing a sniper in a coconut tree.

In May 1943, members of the Des Moines Audubon signed a 10-year lease on a 3-acre wooded site between 26th and 28th streets in the 800 block in the city of Des Moines. Placing the tract under the society's supervision was expected to halt the wanton destruction of birds and wild flowers by youthful marauders and eventually restore it to a natural state. A fourth acre, which had been used for observation and bird study for years by Audubon members, was owned by Toni Wendelburg.

The area was hilly with some gullies being 20-25 feet deep. The western portion of the tract was heavily wooded. In describing the area in the club's annual yearbook, it was stated that the sanctuary was open to the public for study of birds, trees, and wildflowers. Boys and girls visiting the sanctuary had to be under competent leadership. The sanctuary remained under the Des Moines Audubon's care until May 1952 when Toni Wendelburg reported at the annual meeting that the lease had been cancelled and the property sold for building sites.

During the club's first 30 years, the member who was the epitome of the Audubon ethic was Mrs. Toni Wendelburg. Born in Ottawa, Illinois in 1868, she graduated from the former Milwaukee Seminary at Milwaukee, Wisconsin and came to Des Moines in 1905 where she taught the first physical education classes at West High School. Subsequently, at elementary teaching positions at Cooper, Grant, and Phillips schools, she brought nature into the classroom at every opportunity. She

sponsored bird clubs and gave freely of her time to youth organizations. For many years she conducted bird hikes as part of the summer recreation program of the city playgrounds.

With her retirement in 1933, she directed her energies to the Audubon cause, giving lectures, preparing exhibits, and leading study groups. She held, at one time or another, virtually every leadership position in the Des Moines club.

The acre of ground that surrounded her house, described by her friends as "an orderly wilderness", was often visited by botany students from Drake University who were welcome to collect specimens. It adjoined the club's sanctuary.

She was a charter member of the Des Moines Audubon as well as the Iowa Ornithologists' Union (I.O.U.) joining both in 1923. In 1947, she was made an honorary life member of the Des Moines club and in 1954 the same honor was bestowed by the I.O.U.



*Mrs. Toni  
Wendelburg*

In 1955 she received the first prize nationally for an essay on conservation from the National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc. In addition, she was the holder of the Honor Award of the Iowa State Horticulture Society, its highest honor.

Even in her later years, she continued to be active, participating in bird counts and field trips. On 13 May 1958, she died at the age of 90. In an editorial in the Des Moines newspaper, they eulogized her when they stated that "Des Moines lost one of its most ardent and influential nature lovers in (her) death."

In the fall of 1943, the club announced that it would sponsor for the first time the National Audubon screen tour featuring widely known naturalists. Each program consisted of a motion picture narrated by a guest speaker. After the program, the speaker was available to answer questions and mingle with the audience. Usually a small fee was charged to help defray the speaker's expenses. The club signed a contract with National Audubon and agreed to pay \$300 for the lectures plus a 50-50 split of any profits.

As the popularity of the programs increased, the Department of Adult Education of the Des Moines Public Schools co-sponsored the series with the Des Moines Audubon. It was not unusual to have audiences in the hundreds when popular naturalists were to speak. On 15 October 1945, 650 people attended the lecture of Howard Cleaves and his film "Midnight Movies in Animaland" at the Drake University auditorium. This was the largest audience to that date to attend a presentation. To handle audiences of this size, the auditoria of North and Roosevelt High Schools were used as well as those at Drake University, Hoyt Sherman Place, and the Art Center. Speakers included Olin Sewall Pettingill, Alexander Sprunt, Arthur Allen, Allan Cruickshank, and Roger Tory Peterson.

In 1934, Ross and Florence Thornburg joined the club and served on many of the organization's committees. In 1940, due to poor health, they moved to Arizona where they became active in the fledgling Tucson Audubon Society. Florence wrote the constitution and by-laws of the new organization, served as president, and coordinated the Christmas Bird Count.

The couple remained in constant contact with Des Moines club members with letters and return visits. The club thought so highly of them that they were the banquet speakers at the club's 25th anniversary ceremony in 1948. The Thornburgs were leaders in the conservation movement in Arizona. In 1952, they discovered a birder's paradise at Patagonia along Sonoita Creek in southern Arizona. Largely

through their efforts and The Nature Conservancy, 309 acres were purchased in 1965. Both Thornburgs died suddenly in spring 1967.

The 22nd annual meeting of the I.O.U. was hosted by the Des Moines Audubon on 13-14 May 1944 at the Hotel Kirkwood in Des Moines. Mayor John MacVicar welcomed the group to the city. Bruce Stiles of the Conservation Commission and Des Moines Audubon member gave a response. Jack Musgrove, another Des Moines Audubon member and museum director at the State Historical Building, spoke on "Less Common Shorebirds." A variety of other speakers rounded out the program.

The banquet was held in the Pioneer Room of the hotel. Philip DuMont, the evening speaker, read a paper on "A Review of Ornithology in Iowa: Accomplishments and Objectives."

Three field trips the next morning ended at Walnut Woods State Park where lunch was served and the bird tally taken. A resolution was made commending Jack and Mary Musgrove on their new book *Waterfowl in Iowa* which had been well received. A final resolution of sympathy was made to Noah Blosser on the death of his wife Kate LaMar Blosser who had been an active member and officer of both the Des Moines Audubon and the I.O.U.

In 1943, Albert Berkowitz moved to Des Moines from St. Louis. Since the bird club that he belong to there had published a newsletter, he suggested that the Des Moines club begin a similar publication to announce programs, field trips, bird counts, and other events. This idea was discussed at a meeting held in February 1944 at the University Church of Christ. Several names were suggested for the title with Mr. Berkowitz's *Redstart* winning the honor. Joe Brown drew the sketch of the redstart that graced the newsletter's masthead.



Albert Berkowitz

The first issue was published in September 1944 with Miss Josephine Baumgartner as editor. After one year, Miss Baumgartner resigned and Mabel Goshorn Tate, the assistant editor, took over. Mrs. Tate was editor for two years; illness forced her to resign. Gladys Haskell, her assistant, assumed the editorship and held this position for the next 23 years.

In 1945, the editors published the booklet the *Goldfinch, Official Bird of Iowa* because in the editor's words, "many national units and organizations are not as yet aware Iowa has a state bird. This booklet should leave no doubt as to the authenticity of this fact. We hope it stimulates the further study of the ever intriguing and interesting subject of conservation in its many forms both from the scientific as well as aesthetic points of view."

During the 1945-46 season, separate groups were formed for the study of plants, insects, and birds. The plant study group was led by Toni Wendelburg and used the Audubon Sanctuary which was located next door to Toni's house. Jean Gessell led the plant group and Albert Berkowitz, with the help of Jack Musgrove, led the bird group. Usually 8-15 members would meet monthly to study a pre-planned agenda.

Jean Pulver Gessell was born in Reynolds, Nebraska in 1890. She lived for many years in Sioux City returning to Des Moines in 1942. Nature was her hobby with birds, moths, and butterflies being her special interests. She was known nationally for her studies of the large silk moths. She raised large broods of them in cages and intensively studied their lives and habits. She corresponded with Edwin Way Teale in regard to this research. She inaugurated the insect study group for the club and served as its leader until illness prevented her from continuing. In May 1948 she was made

an honorary life member of the club. She died on 10 August 1948 after an extended illness.

During the 1938-39 year, Dr. B. F. Kilgore served as president. He was followed by Joseph F. Smith in 1939-41 and Mrs. Arthur Becker for 1941-42. The Becker household, located near Drake University, welcomed all visitors and served as a magnet for those who loved birds and the outdoors.

In fall 1942, Irene Smith took the helm and served as president for the next five years. She joined the club in 1926 and served on every committee and on the board. In addition to serving as historian, Irene enjoyed giving nature programs. She taught elementary school classes in social studies, science, and language arts at Monroe School in Des Moines. Many of her students became active members of the club. She was noted for her artistic exhibits in such diverse places as banks, garden clubs, schools, and businesses. In 1970, the club honored her with a special service award in recognition of her years of service to the organization.

At the 27 May 1947 annual meeting, the members decided to use the Moose Auditorium at 3rd and Locust for next year's screen tour series because it was centrally located and could seat crowds of more than 1,000. It was also mentioned that during the past year, a slide projector, screen, and slides were purchased so that conservation programs could be given to outside groups. It was noted that John Stewart, a charter member, had died in Lakeland, Florida on 7 October 1946.

Also presented to the membership at this meeting was the report of the nominating committee with its slate of officers for 1947-48. All positions were filled except that of president. Howard Bump nominated Florence Chamberlain who was then elected by unanimous vote.

At the November 1947 meeting, Maynard Reece spoke on "Bird Art and Bird Artists." He spoke at length on John James Audubon and his contemporaries. He then described the portrayal of birds from the single, stilted poses of Audubon's time to the present in which birds were shown using their natural habitat. He stated that the newest trend involved the use of light and shadow enabling the artist to portray birds at different times of the day and season.

On 24 February 1948, a special business meeting was held at Bishop's Cafeteria. Florence Chamberlain was elected as a delegate to the Audubon Nature Study Camp. A motion to limit the term of president to one year failed but a second motion to limit the term of president to two consecutive terms passed 14 to 5 with 8 abstaining.

Program chairman Albert Berkowitz spoke on the screen tours. He stated that with the centrally located auditorium and good publicity attendance should have been high. But, with only 35-40 people selling tickets, attendance was down. He suggested that the screen tours be dropped. A vote of the members present decided to suspend the tour for one year. After all expenses were paid, the screen tours for the 1947-48 year generated a meager profit of \$27.24.

At the 19 September 1948 board meeting, the financial status of the club was discussed. Expenditures had exceeded income for the previous two years. Under Woodward Brown's guidance, a budget was to be prepared. In addition, the club would discontinue sending flowers for illness and funerals. Instead, get well cards would be sent to ailing members and letters of condolence to families of departed members. Florence Chamberlain presided, beginning her second and last term as president.

At the 6 October board meeting, a budget was presented by Woodward Brown. His recommendation that in order to balance the books, membership dues should be raised to \$2.00 per year was approved.

Members of the Des Moines Audubon met at Younkers Tea Room on 5 November 1948 to celebrate the club's 25th anniversary. Despite a heavy downpour outside, spirits were high inside. Joe Brown remembers that outside the dining room there were two glass counters filled with mounted birds, study skins, bird nests, eggs, bird books, an exhibit of nature photos by Helmut Wilk, a semiprofessional photographer, copies of the *Warbler*, *Iowa Bird Life*, and publicity about field trips and meetings. Sixty-six members were present. Five of the eight living charter members were the honored guests. They were: Janetta DuMont, Olivia McCabe, Estelle Reynolds, Toni Wendelburg, and Minnie Youngerman.

After dinner, members met in the cafeteria to hear the charter members recall earlier meetings and field trips. Ross and Florence Thornburg of Tucson, Arizona then presented a slide presentation "The Fascinating Southwest."

At the April 1949 meeting, Ruth Binsfield was elected president for 1949-50. The annual report for 1948-49 was presented to the club at the May meeting. It was reported that two lecturers had been sponsored: Arthur Allen of Cornell University on 15 October and Ries Tuttle, columnist with the Des Moines Tribune on 14 January.

At the October 1949 meeting, Albert Berkowitz distributed the new bird checklist sheets. He hoped that the experienced birders would fill in the sheets for the next two years so *The Birds of Polk County* could be updated, having last been done in 1931.

This concludes part II of the history of the Des Moines Audubon club. The concluding part will describe May morning breakfasts, club publications, the Brown's Woods fight, and more member portraits.

715 West St., Colo, IA 50056



Des Moines Audubon Club members on a field trip in Greenwood Park. From left to right, Mrs. Harold Peasley, Mrs. H. L. Bump, Janetta DuMont, and Joseph Brown. Photo undated but probably taken in 1940s or early 1950s.

# REPORT OF THE RECORDS COMMITTEE FOR 1989

CARL J. BENDORF AND THOMAS H. KENT

The Records Committee reviewed 61 records from 1989 and 16 old records. Of the 1989 records, 44 were accepted (3 in the category of possible escaped or introduced) and 17 were not accepted. Of the old records, 1 was a review of a previously accepted record and remained accepted, 1 was an examination of a specimen and accepted, and 14 were reviews of old records of accidental species that had not been previously reviewed (9 accepted, 5 not accepted). Seven species were added to the state list in 1989: Tricolored Heron, Black-shouldered Kite, Laughing Gull, Little Gull, Common Black-headed Gull, California Gull, and Slaty-backed Gull.

The Committee met once on 15 July 1989 in Des Moines. It was decided to write formal procedures for review of records and annual review of the secretary. It was decided to begin work on a revision of the state list to include records through 1989.

Committee members for 1989 with years in which their terms expire were: W. Ross Silcock (1990), Raymond L. Cummins (1991), Francis L. Moore (1992), Carl J. Bendorf (1993, appointed secretary after Kent's resignation), Mark Proescholdt (1993, appointed to fill Bendorf's term), Stephen J. Dinsmore (1994, resigned November 1989), Eugene Armstrong (1994, appointed to fill Dinsmore's term), and Thomas H. Kent (secretary, resigned November 1989).

The new classification scheme published in the last report (*IBL* 59:75) was used. In brief, A = accepted (-S = specimen, -P = photograph, -R = recording, -D = documentation only, -E = possible escaped or introduced bird) and NA = not accepted.

## OLD RECORDS

**Brown Pelican:** Three records were accepted: (1) A-D, one was shot in early July 1900 nine miles north of Boone in Boone Co. on the Des Moines R. (Henning 1905), and the specimen, now lost, was examined by DuMont (1933); (2) A-D, one on 26 Apr and 2 May 1959 at Brenton Sl. in Polk Co. was observed plunge diving (Peasley and Peasley 1960); and (3) A-P, one on 10 May 1969 1 mile w. of Montpelier in Muscatine Co. was photographed (Petersen 1972a). Two records were not accepted: (1) the species was listed on Thomas Say's list for 1819-1820 without citation of a specific record (James 1923); and (2) one on 14 to 28 Sep 1963 at Twin Lakes in Calhoun Co. was listed in the Field Reports without further detail (*IBL* 33:86).



*Eurasian Wigeon, North Twin Lake, Oct 1933 from Van Wyngarden collection.  
Photo by T. H. Kent taken in 1982.*

**Eurasian Wigeon:** Two records were accepted: (1) A-S, a male was shot in Oct 1933 at North Twin L. in Calhoun Co. (DuMont 1935), and the mounted specimen in the Van Wyngarden

collection was photographed in 1982 (see Figure 1); and (2) A-D, a male on 13 Apr 1972 at Rock Creek L. in Jasper Co. was described (Maish 1972). Two records were not accepted: (1) one in the spring of 1947 was reported from Black Hawk L. in Sac Co. by a conservation officer, but no details were published (Musgrove and Musgrove 1977); and (2) one near Iowa City in Johnson Co. on 7 May 1961 was mentioned without details (*IBL* 31:66, Audubon Field Notes 15:414), and the observer in response to a query from the Committee was unable to locate notes on the sighting.

**King Eider:** Four records were accepted: (1) A-S, University of Iowa specimen #25003 is an immature male shot on 10 Nov 1894 on the Mississippi R. near Keokuk in Lee Co. (Praeger 1895 a,b; DuMont 1933); (2) A-S, Putnam Museum specimen is an immature male shot on 18 Nov 1950 opposite New Boston, Illinois, in Louisa Co. (Morrissey 1951); (3) A-S, University of Iowa specimen #33585 is a female or immature shot on 8 Nov 1979 at L. Odessa in Louisa Co. (Newlon and Kent 1981); and (4) A-S, a photo of a mounted specimen is published for an immature bird shot on 8 Nov 1971 at Ingham L. in Emmet Co. (Petersen 1972b, Kent 1987). One record was not accepted: no details were given for a bird seen on 20 Dec 1964 at Bellevue in Jackson Co. (*IBL* 35:24).

**Least Tern:** A-S, a wing found on 30 May 1988 at IPL Ponds in Pottawattamie Co. by Stephen J. Dinsmore is now Iowa State University specimen [ISU #2478].



*Least Tern wing, IPL Ponds, 30 May 1988. Photo by J. Dinsmore.*

**Western Wood-Pewee:** A-D, a previously reviewed record from 21 Jun 1979 at Elm L. in Wright Co. (Schaufenbuel 1979) was accepted based on the description of the bird and its repeated song.

## 1989 RECORDS ACCEPTED

\* = documentation not previously cited in literature

**Red-throated Loon:** Two birds (one with a reddish throat patch) were documented at L. Manawa on 27, 29-30 Apr (*IBL* 59:79, Myers 1989). An immature or basic-plumaged adult was at Saylorville Res. on 8 Nov (\*Stephen J. Dinsmore, *IBL* 60:11).

**Pacific Loon:** An immature or basic plumaged adult was at Saylorville Res. from 22 to 24 Oct (\*Stephen J. Dinsmore, \*Robert K. Myers, \*Ann M. Johnson, *IBL* 60:11); a similar bird seen there on 29 Oct (\*Ray L. Cummins, *IBL* 60:11) may have been a different individual. A single bird was described from IPL Ponds on 5 Nov (\*W. Ross Silcock, *IBL* 60:11)

**Tricolored Heron:** A single bird was documented at Cone M. on 29 Apr (*IBL* 59:78, 79; Kent 1991a).

**Trumpeter Swan:** Two adults photographed at Charles City on 26 Feb (*IBL* 59:48, photo) were accepted into category A-E. They were quite tame and had wing tags, apparently from the Minnesota reintroduction program. Another bird photographed with Tundra Swans n. of Le Claire on 9-10 Jan and 25 Feb (*IBL* 59:48, photo) was also accepted into category A-E.

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** A male was closely studied and photographed at DeSoto N.W.R. on 2-8 Jan (*IBL* 59:50, Silcock 1989). Another male was compared to nearby Common Goldeneyes on 12-15 Nov at IPL Ponds (*IBL* 60:12, Grenon 1990).

**Black-shouldered Kite:** A bird at Otter Creek M. on 18 Sep (\*P. Petersen, *IBL* 60:11, 12) was distinguished from Mississippi Kite by its white tail and black on the wing.

- Mississippi Kite:** 2 sub-adults were photographed at Dudgeon L. in Benton Co. on 5-9 Jun (*IBL* 59:110; Conrads, et al. 1989).
- Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Possible evidence of an Iowa nesting was a juvenile bird in Hardin Co. on 19 Jul (*IBL* 60:13). Cooper's Hawk was eliminated by the size and the voice.
- Harris' Hawk:** An adult bird was documented and photographed s. of Blairstown in Benton Co. on 10-14 Sep (*IBL* 60:13). It was accepted into category A-E because this species is a rare vagrant and is kept by falconers.
- Black Rail:** One was seen briefly at Zirbel Sl., Cerro Gordo Co., on 15 May (\*Jan L. Walter, *IBL* 59:78, 81). The chestnut back markings were described on a bird in Dickinson Co. on 8 Oct (*IBL* 60:11, 13; Hansen 1991).
- Red Knot:** A basic plumage adult was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 31 Aug (*IBL* 60:14). An adult and a juvenile were seen by many at Saylorville Res. from 3 to 6 Sep (*IBL* 60:14).
- Long-billed Curlew:** One was well described at Riverton Area on 11 Apr (Priebe 1990).
- Jaeger species:** 2 jaegers flying strongly over Algona on 29 Oct (*IBL* 60:14) were not identified as to species.
- Laughing Gull:** The first accepted records for Iowa came in a rush. A juvenile bird was seen by many and photographed at Red Rock Res. from 19 to 26 Aug Red Rock Res. (*IBL* 60:14). Another juvenile was at IPL Ponds on 27 Aug (*IBL* 60:14). Finally, another juvenile and a second-year bird were described from n. of Burlington on 9 Sep (*IBL* 60:14, Kent 1991b).
- Little Gull:** The small size, distinctive underwing pattern and head pattern of a winter adult was well described from Saylorville Res. on 8 Oct (*IBL* 60:11, 15; Dinsmore, et al. 1990).
- Common Black-headed Gull:** A winter adult was well seen (blood-red bill, white leading edge to upperwing, dark underwing) at Saylorville Res. on 2 and 4 Nov (\*Stephen J. Dinsmore, \*B. J. Rose, *IBL* 60:11, 15).
- California Gull:** The bill, eye, mantle, and leg colors were conclusively described on an adult seen at Credit I. on 23 Nov (\*Louise Augustine, \*P. Petersen, \*J. Fuller, *IBL* 60:11, 15).
- Thayer's Gull:** Seven reports were accepted with the following references: at Davenport/Bettendorf on 18 Feb (*IBL* 59:52); at IPL Ponds on 29 Oct to 5 Nov (*IBL* 60:15); at Red Rock Res. on 6 Nov (*IBL* 60:15) and 8 Nov (*IBL* 60:15); at Lock and Dam 19 on 24-25 Nov (*IBL* 60:15, photo T. H. Kent); at Saylorville Res. on 28 Nov (*IBL* 60:15); and at Saylorville Res. on 7 Dec (*IBL* 60 (1): cover, 60:52). This species is clearly being looked for and found with increasing frequency in Iowa but it remains a potential identification problem.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Two reports were accepted. An adult at Saylorville Res. on 19 Aug (\*Robert Cecil, *IBL* 60:11, 15) was most unusual. Another bird, a juvenile/first-winter bird, was described from Red Rock Res. from 5 to 27 Oct (\*Ann Johnson, \*Jim Sinclair, \*Ray L. Cummins, \*Jim Fuller, *IBL* 60:11, 15).
- Slaty-backed Gull:** A single adult bird in winter plumage was seen by many at Bettendorf from 12 to 21 Feb (*IBL* 59:52, 78, 82; Fuller 1989). In addition to several rounds of Committee review, this record was evaluated by Bruce Peterjohn, Ronald E. Goetz, Guy McCaskie, and Laurence C. Binford. Several photos were supportive of plumage and the structural details described in the documentations.
- Great Black-backed Gull:** A winter adult was described at Davenport on 13 Dec (*IBL* 60:52).
- Black-legged Kittiwake:** A first-winter bird was observed by many at Red Rock Res. on 9-10 Dec (*IBL* 60:52).
- Sabine's Gull:** Two juvenile birds were at separate locations on consecutive days in Fremont Co. on 24 Sep (*IBL* 60:15) and Diamond L. on 25 Sep (*IBL* 60:15).
- Mountain Bluebird:** Up to 8 birds were documented and photographed at Lake Anita S.P. on 7-24 Mar (*IBL* 59:83, photo by Doug Rose). A single bird was described from near Emmetsburg on 19 Mar (*IBL* 59:83, Thelen 1989).
- Common Yellowthroat:** A female or immature bird was at Iowa City on 9-10 Dec (*IBL* 60:53, listed incorrectly as 8-9 Dec).
- Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** A group of birds n. of Burlington was seen by many from 16 Dec 1989 to 14 Jan 1990 (*IBL* 60:54, photographs not submitted to Records Committee).

## 1989 RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

- Ferruginous Hawk:** Four records (*IBL* 59:78, 81, 111; plus two unmentioned in *IBL*) were evaluated but none were conclusive. Various problems included possible confusion with Rough-legged Hawk and a lack of close study.

- Whimbrel:** A single bird flying overhead was identified primarily on size and voice but similar species were not definitely eliminated (*IBL* 60:11, 14).
- Red Phalarope:** A description given for an August bird in basic plumage was possibly a Sanderling (*IBL* 60:11, 14).
- Bonaparte's Gull:** A report of a bird in January (no reference) may have been correct but similar species could not be eliminated.
- Thayer's Gull:** The following four reports generally lacked sufficient detail and were difficult to evaluate: at Davenport on 2 Jan (*IBL* 59:52); at Saylorville Res. on 28 Jan (*IBL* 59:52); at Credit Is. on 24 Nov (*IBL* 60:15); and at Lock and Dam 14 on 17 Dec (*IBL* 60:52). In one case, a description of the tail pattern in a first-winter bird was not included and it was not possible to eliminate the possibility of Iceland Gull. In another report, an adult bird was described with a mantle color lighter than Herring Gull instead of somewhat darker as would be expected. Identifications relying primarily on just one or two characters tend not to be accepted for this species.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** A photo of a sub-adult gull with a prominent tail band (no reference) was judged to depict a second-winter Herring Gull.
- Western Gull:** The details given were not sufficient to confidently eliminate similar species (*IBL* 60:49, 52).
- Royal Tern:** The bird was seen at a great distance by most observers (*IBL* 60:11, 15). Photos depicted a first-year Caspian Tern, many of which were present in the area at the time.
- Western Wood-Pewee:** A wood-pewee emitting an unusual call note once (*IBL* 60:11, 15). Juvenile Eastern Wood-Pewees can sound more buzzy and hoarse than adults. The date and habitat were inappropriate for Western Wood-Pewee.
- Baird's Sparrow:** A suggestive description of a bird in NW Iowa lacked sufficient detail to rule out similar species (*IBL* 59:78, 85).
- McCown's Longspur:** A report of a single bird did not rule out similar species, including Lapland Longspur (*IBL* 60:47).

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## FIELD REPORTS--SPRING 1991

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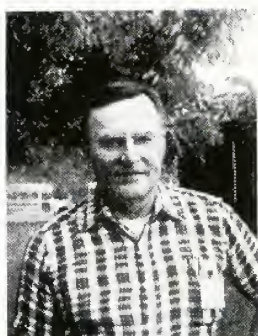
### WEATHER

March was unusually warm and wet overall (see Table 1). It was the second wettest March in 119 years of state records (only 0.06 inch shy of the record set last year). There were several strong windstorms on the 6th, 12-13th, and 22-23rd; but the mean monthly wind speed was only 3% above average. Strong storm systems occurred on the 12th, 17th, 22nd, and 27th. Tornadoes were widespread on the 22nd. Twelve inches of snow fell at Dubuque on the 12-13th.

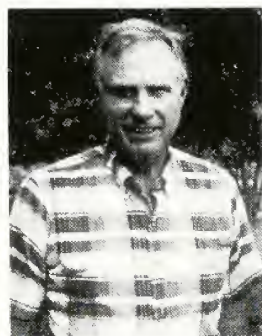
April went into the record books as the wettest in 119 years; precipitation was almost twice normal. The month started out relatively warm and dry, but after the 8th nearly daily showers and thunderstorms marched across the state for the rest of the month.

May continued unusually warm and wet. The total rainfall was only the 26th wettest on record, but it was sufficient to add greatly to widespread flooding. About one-quarter of Iowa, especially in the east and along the southern and western fringes, received below average rainfall.

Total average rainfall for the spring season was the greatest since 1892. Many of Iowa's major rivers were in nearly continuous flood condition. As a result, usual wetland birding areas were often under water or greatly altered, and nearby fields were inundated. The four major reservoirs were practically filled to capacity.



*Tom Kent*



*Jim Fuller*



*Carl Bendorf*

Table 1. Mean Temperature and Precipitation with Deviation from Normal

	Temperature, F Mean (Deviation)	Precipitation, inches Mean (Deviation)
March	39.4 (+5.5)	4.26 (+2.11)
April	51.9 (+2.6)	5.77 (+2.58)
May	64.6 (+3.8)	5.21 (+1.25)
January-May		16.33 (+5.09)

### GENERAL TRENDS

With the open water and warm temperatures, waterfowl and gulls moved through early. Herring Gulls moved through without lingering. Waterfowl made a particularly good showing with all three swans and scoters, more than usual numbers of Cinnamon Teal, Greater Scaup, and Oldsquaw, large numbers of Ross' Geese, and two accidental species (Garganey and Eurasian Wigeon). There were no spectacular concentrations of song birds, although good numbers were found at some locations. By late May there were few lingering migrants. Shorebirds arrived early in March in

good numbers in southwestern Iowa, but few were reported again until May. Shorebirding was not as good at the reservoirs because of high water, but flooded fields offered alternate habitat. A number of early passerines were found in southeastern Iowa by observers who suspected that they might be there, and several unusual warblers were noted in north-central Iowa.

## UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Potential new species for the state include Garganey and Fish Crow. Other accidentals that were documented include Tricolored Heron, Eurasian Wigeon, Mississippi Kite, Black-shouldered Kite, Black-necked Stilt, Ruff, Thayer's Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Townsend's Warbler, Western Tanager, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow. Casual species (some of which are no longer so casual) include Red-necked Grebe, White-faced Ibis, Black Scoter, Surf Scoter, Ferruginous Hawk, Whimbrel, Burrowing Owl, Bewick's Wren, Great-tailed Grackle, and House Finch. Trumpeter Swans from the Minnesota reintroduction program were seen. A Gambel's Quail was considered a released or escaped bird.

## SPECIES DATA

\* = documented, m.ob. = many observers, [] = record date

**Common Loon:** March sightings included 1 at Saylorville Res. on 16 Mar (BE)[2nd earliest] and 1 at Nashua on 22 Mar (EuA, EIA).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** 2, presumably breeding, were at Moeckley Prairie e. of Polk City on 31 May (BE).

**Horned Grebe:** 2 were at Saylorville Res. on 10 Mar (BE)[ties 3rd earliest]; other March sightings were at Badger Creek L. on the 13th (EuA, EIA), at Swan L. in Johnson Co. on the 25th (JLF), and at Cone M. on the 30th (PW).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Singles were at Pleasant Creek S.P. on 1 Apr (\*JLF)[3rd earliest], at Saylorville Res. on 3 Apr (SJD), and at Zirbel Sl. on 7 May (\*KLP).

**Eared Grebe:** The first were 4 at IPL Ponds and L. Manawa on 28 Mar (SJD), and the peak of 19 was at IPL Ponds on 3 May (SJD). There were many other records from the following counties: Cerro Gordo, Greene, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hardin, Linn, Marshall, Osceola, Polk, Scott, Sioux, and Woodbury.

**Western Grebe:** The only report was of 1 at Lost Island L. on 15 May (SJD).

**American White Pelican:** The first was at Red Rock Res. on 16 Mar (AMJ); the peak was 403 at Saylorville Res. on 3 Apr (SJD). Up to 200 were seen in various western and central locations through 18 May. Eastern Iowa birds included 5 at Coralville Res. on 25 Mar (JLF), 8 at New Albin on 7 Apr (FL), and 9 at Cardinal M. on 14 Apr. (DC).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** The first was 1 at Hendrickson M. on 23 Mar (MPr, BPr); the peak was 350 on 20 Apr at Saylorville Res. (AMJ).

**American Bittern:** 1 was w. of Adel on 2 Apr (AMJ)[3rd earliest]. Other sightings were of 1-3 birds from ten other counties.

**Least Bittern:** None were reported. It is hard to believe that none were seen.

**Great Blue Heron:** 2 nests at Woodland Mound Preserve in Warren Co. were still active on 25 May (JSi).

**Great Egret:** The first were at Cone M. (JLF) and Coralville Res. (THK) on 31 Mar; the peaks were 22 at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD) and 25 at New Albin on 15 May (THK).

**Snowy Egret:** 5 at four locations included 2 at L. Paullina in O'Brien Co. on 2 May (Jim Huber fide DBi); 1 at Otter Creek M. on 10 May (THK), 1 along the Raccoon R. in Polk Co. on 14 May (PA, RA), and 1 at Riverton A. on 17 May (SJD).

**Little Blue Heron:** An adult flew over Hickory Hill P. on 1 May (JLF) and another was at Lakin Sl. on 10 May (RKM).

**Tricolored Heron:** A first-year bird at IPL Ponds on 4 May (\*JG) would be the second state record.

**Cattle Egret:** The first were 4 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 6 May (refuge personnel fide MCK); 1-16 were seen at eight other locations in May.

**Green-backed Heron:** 1 was described at Ames on 6 Apr (Vance Polton fide JJD)[3rd earliest].

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** The first was at Saylorville Res. on 3 Apr (SJD); the peaks were 20 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 14 May (MCK) and 23 at Big Wall L. on 23 May (SJD).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** The only reports were 1 near Perry on 17 May (RKM) and 1 at Zirbel Sl. on 22 May (KLP).

**Ibis species:** Singles were near Jewell on 8 May (\*MPR) and 13 May (AMJ).

**White-faced Ibis:** 6 (4 with white faces) were at New L. on 30 Apr (SJD); 1 was at Zirbel Sl. on 22 May (\*KLP).

**Tundra Swan:** 28 were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 18 Mar (MCK), 1 was at IPL Ponds on 31 Mar (BKP, LJP, details), and 1 was at Mud L. in Clay Co. on 1 Apr (LAS).

**Trumpeter Swan:** 2 were at Hendrickson M. from 2 to 10 Mar; one had an orange wing tag numbered 125 (HZ, MPR, BPR, SJD).

**Mute Swan:** 2 were at Johnston on 30 Mar (DCP, details).

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** The first were 87 on 3 Mar in Marion Co. (JSi); the peaks were 5,400 in Fremont Co. on 15 Mar and 1,900 at Willow Sl. on 16 Mar (SJD). The only report from eastern Iowa was a lingering bird at West Amana on 10 May (THK). Also lingering were 14 at Riverton to at least 17 May (SJD).

**Snow Goose:** The peak was 200,000 in Fremont Co. on 11 Mar (SJD).

**Ross' Goose:** 1,200 in Fremont Co. on 6 Mar, said to represent 4-5 percent of the number of Snow Geese (SJD), are one of the largest concentrations ever reported in Iowa. Dinsmore also reported other large concentrations with 82 in SW Greene Co. on 10 Mar, 34 on Long Pond in Guthrie Co. on 10 Mar, 41 at Hendrickson M. on 20 Mar, and 104 at Willow Sl. on 23 Mar. Eastern Iowa reports included 2 at Cone M. on 17 Mar (THK) and 1 at Kent P. and Swan L. from 5 to 10 Mar (\*JLF, DRP). Linging birds were 2 at Trumbull L. on 22 Apr (SJD) and 1 at Riverton A. on 17 May (SJD). It is clear from these data and reports from surrounding states that Ross' Geese are increasing in the Midwest.

**Canada Goose:** The peak was 2,300 at Saylorville Res. on 4 Mar (BE).

**Green-winged Teal:** The peak was 1,300 at Riverton A. on 15 Mar (SJD); 1 lingered at Swan L. in Johnson Co. until 11 May (PW).

**American Black Duck:** A female with 2 young at Bettendorf on 7 May (PCP) is the first nesting record in a decade. Linging singles were at Zirbel Sl. on 15 May (THK) and Snake Creek M. on 17 May (JSi).

**Northern Pintail:** The peaks were 8,000 at Riverton A. on 5 Mar, 3,000 at Forney L. on 6 Mar, and 3,000 at Dunbar Sl. on 16 Mar (SJD). The last was 1 at Forney L. on 13 May (THK).

**Garganey:** A male at IPS Ponds in Woodbury Co. on 11 May (\*JFP, \*BFH) will be a first state record if accepted by the Records Committee.

**Blue-winged Teal:** The first 2 were at Bays Branch on 5 Mar (SJD).

**Cinnamon Teal:** Single males were at Riverton A. from 6 to 9 Mar (SJD, m.ob.), at Hendrickson M. on 19 Mar (Marlys Frohwein fide HZ), at Colo Ponds from 14 Apr to 1 May (\*JJD, \*JLF), and e. of Jewell on 8 May (MPR).

**Northern Shoveler:** In Sioux Co., the first were on 20 Mar and the peak was 120 on 9 Apr (JV).

**Eurasian Wigeon:** 1 male at Riverton A. on 6 Mar (\*SJD) will be the fourth state record if accepted by the Records Committee.

**Canvasback:** The first were 70 at L. Manawa on 2 Mar (BKP, LJP); the peak was 2,000 at Montrose on 30 Mar (SJD, THK), and the last was on Swan L. in Johnson Co. on 25 May (THK).

**Redhead:** 40 were earlier than usual in Sioux Co. on 9 Mar (JV) and were the peak reported. Birds present in the nesting areas of N Iowa included 30 in NW Iowa on 14 May (THK) and 28 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 May (MCK).

**Ring-necked Duck:** The peaks reported included 130 at Cardinal M. on 28 Mar (DC) and 300 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 16 Apr (MCK). One lingered in Johnson Co. on 27 May (RJH).

**Greater Scaup:** The first were 3 at Bays Branch on 5 Mar (SJD). The peaks were 50 at Clinton on 21 Mar (PCP) and 22 at IPL Ponds on 28 Mar (SJD). The last were 2 at Swan L. in Johnson Co. on 20 Apr (DRP). From 1-9 were detailed from eight other locations.

**Lesser Scaup:** The peak was 30,000 at Montrose on 30 Mar (SJD).

**Oldsquaw:** Singles were at Red Rock Res. on 3 Mar (\*DS) and Saylorville Res. on 20 Mar (SJD); 1-3 were at Little Wall L. from 25 Mar to 10 Apr (SJD, m.ob.).

**Black Scoter:** 2 females were at Montrose on 30 Mar (\*THK) and 1 was seen there the next day (\*JLF)[2nd and latest spring record].

**Surf Scoter:** Single female-types were at Rush L. in Osceola Co. and at Little Wall L. on 15 May (SJD, details).

**White-winged Scoter:** 2 males were on the Shell Rock River in Worth Co. on 3 Apr (JLW, details).

**Bufflehead:** 64 were on a small lake at Johnston on 30 Mar (DCP); the last were 24 at IPL Ponds on 17 May (SJD).

**Common Merganser:** The peak was 5,600 at Saylorville Res. on 9 Mar (SJD); the last was at Hawarden on 9 May (JV).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** The first was a female at Saylorville Res. on 2 Mar (SJD, details), the peak was 436 at Saylorville Res. on 3 Apr (SJD), and the last was a female at Zirbel Sl. on 15 May (THK).

**Ruddy Duck:** The first was at Saylorville Res. on 12 Mar (SJD); the peak was 2,200 at Montrose on 30 Mar (SJD).

**Turkey Vulture:** The first was at Sabula on 10 Mar (JLF).

**Osprey:** 1 or 2 were reported from six locations from 13 Apr to 9 May.

**Kite species:** 3 documented reports will be referred to the Records Committee.

**Bald Eagle:** High counts include 60 ad. and 49 imm. at Riverton A. on 5 Mar (SJD), 72 on 10 Mar at Saylorville Res. (BE), and 129 at Red Rock Res. on 10 Mar (AMJ). A nest at Green Island found on 3 Apr contained 2 young on 8 May and 1 young on 16 May (PCP); 2 adults were seen near a nest at New Albin on 15 May (THK).

**Northern Harrier:** 1 was w. of Sioux Center on 29 May (JV).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Only a few were reported. The last was at Shimek F. on 15 May (DRP).

**Cooper's Hawk:** A nest was found at Iowa 4-H Camp in Boone Co. on 21 Apr (SJD). There were reports of 1-3 from eleven other locations.

**Northern Goshawk:** 1 imm. was at Saylorville Res. on 22 Mar (SJD, details), an adult was in Shimek F. in Lee Co. on 31 Mar (\*RIC, THK details), and another adult was at Saylorville Res. on 6 Apr (SJD, details).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Reports were from Bremer, Dallas, Hardin, Marion, and Sioux counties.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** The first were 4 on 17 Apr in Boone Co. (SJD), the peak was 12 on 25 Apr in Appanoose Co. (AMJ), and the last migrants were 9 on 9 May in Grundy Co. (MPr). A nesting pair was in Stone P. on 11 May (BFH).

**Swainson's Hawk:** The first was at Waubonsie S.P. on 25 Mar (BKP)[2nd earliest]. From 1-5 were reported from Dallas, Hardin, Harrison, Kossuth, Marion, Marshall, Montgomery, Pottawattamie, Polk, Sioux, and Woodbury counties. A pair returned to a traditional nesting site south of Allendorf in Osceola Co. on 25 Apr (DBi).

**Red-tailed Hawk:** On 25 Mar, 93 were over Algona (MCK) and 68 were at Waubonsie S.P. (BKP).

**Ferruginous Hawk:** A report is referred to the Records Committee.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** 1 was seen on 20 May in Kossuth Co. (MCK, details)[record latest].

**Golden Eagle:** An imm. was at Coralville Res. on 30 Mar (JLF), an adult was kettling with Swainson's Hawks north of Missouri Valley on 8 Apr (\*AMJ), and an imm. was at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 28 Apr (\*THK, \*RIC)[3rd latest].

**American Kestrel:** 35 were seen over 135 miles in C Iowa on 20 Mar (MPr).

**Merlin:** Singles were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 24 Mar (MCK), near Newton on 11 Apr (AMJ), at Otter Creek M. on 26 Apr (JLF), near Ocheyedan on 7 May (DCH, details)[3rd latest], and near Marengo on 18 May (PW)[record latest].

**Peregrine Falcon:** The first was at Saylorville Res. on 4 Apr (Scott Rolfes fide SJD), and the last was near West Branch on 19 May (JLF)[2nd latest]. There were 9 other reports.

**Prairie Falcon:** 1 was seen well in Clay Co. on 7 Mar (\*DBi).

**Gray Partridge:** 2 near Riverton on 12 Mar (SJD) were close to the Missouri border.

**Northern Bobwhite:** Reported as doing well in Sioux Co. (JV).

**Gambel's Quail:** A relatively tame bird in Iowa City on 14 Apr (THK) roamed the city for several weeks. Its origin was unknown, but it is assumed to be a released or escaped bird.

**Yellow Rail:** None were reported.

**King Rail:** The only report was of 1 at Cone M. on 8 May (PCP).

**Virginia Rail:** 1-4 were reported from Otter Creek M., Zirbel Sl., Moeckley Prairie, and Union Slough N.W.R.

**Sora:** The first were 3 at Dunbar Sl. on 6 Apr (SJD) and 1 at Cone M. on 7 Apr (DRP). An incredible 55 were seen (more heard) at Union Slough N.W.R. on 7 May (MCK).

**Common Moorhen:** 1 was at Swan L. in Johnson Co. on 20 Apr (DRP)[2nd earliest]. Five other locations had 1 or 2 birds.

**American Coot:** The peaks were 800 at Cardinal M. on 16 Mar (DC), 1,300 at Little Wall L. on 2 Apr (SJD), and 3,500 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 16 Apr (MCK).

**Sandhill Crane:** Single adults were in SW Greene Co. on 10 Mar and in NW Fremont Co. on 23 Mar (SJD); 3 birds were at Green Island on 22 Apr (EuA, EIA).

**Black-bellied Plover:** The peak was 8 on 11 May at Riverton A. (SJD).

**Lesser Golden-Plover:** The first were in Guthrie and Greene counties on 22 Mar (SJD), and the last were 83 in Greene Co. on 27 May (PA, RA). Flocks of up to 200 were reported on many days.

**Semipalmated Plover:** 2 were reported on a baseball diamond in Algona on 1 Apr (MCK)[record earliest].

**Piping Plover:** 3 birds and a nest were found at IPL Ponds on 10 May (SJD), 3 ad. were at Port Neal in Woodbury Co. on 13 May (BFH, JFP), and 1 bird was at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD).

**Killdeer:** 310 and 500 were counted at Riverton A. on 6 and 28 Mar (SJD).

**Black-necked Stilt:** 1 was at Snyder's Bend in Woodbury Co. from 6 to 14 Apr (\*BFH, \*JLF, \*BKP/LJP, \*TEB/WRS).

**American Avocet:** 2 were at Riverton A. on 8 Apr [record earliest] and 11 May (SJD).

**Greater Yellowlegs:** The first was at Forney L. on 7 Mar (SJD, details)[2nd earliest]. The peaks were 28 at Riverton A. on 27 Mar (SJD) and 56 in Kossuth Co. on 4 May (MCK).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** The first was at Riverton A. on 15 Mar, and the peak of 530 was there on 11 May (SJD).

**Willet:** The first was at Red Rock Res. on 27 Apr (JSi), the peak was 35 at Colo Ponds on 1 May (HZ, JLF), and the last was in Clinton Co. on 8 May (PCP).

**Upland Sandpiper:** The first was in Polk Co. on 20 Apr (BE). Others were reported from Cherokee, Iowa, Kossuth, and Story counties.

**Whimbrel:** 1 was at IPS Ponds in Woodbury Co. on 13 May (\*JFP).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** The first were 16 at Riverton A. (SJD) and 11 at St John's W.A. in Harrison Co. (AMJ) on 8 Apr [3rd earliest]. Peaks of 25 were noted at Forney L. and Lakin Sl. on 13 May (THK). The last were 2 in Grundy Co. on 19 May (MPr, BPr).

**Marbled Godwit:** The first were 2 at McCord Pond in Guthrie Co. on 6 Apr (SJD, details)[3rd earliest]. In addition to five singles at various locations, 7 were n. of Marshalltown on 23 Apr (MPr, BPr), and 6 were at Forney L. on 11 May (SJD).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** Reports were of 5 at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD), 3 at Pleasant Creek L. on 18 May (PW), and 12 at Colo Ponds on 28 May (HZ).

**Sanderling:** The peak was 3 at Riverton A. on 12 May (THK).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** The peak was 308 at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD).

**Western Sandpiper:** Details were given for 2 at Moeckley Prairie on 5 May and 2 in Warren Co. on 12 May (AMJ).

**Least Sandpiper:** The first was at Lakin Sl. on 22 Mar (SJD, details); 68 were at Colo Ponds on 8 May (HZ).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** The first were in Polk Co. on 4 May (PA, RA, AMJ), the peak was 124 at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD), and the last were 18 at Colo Ponds on 28 May (HZ).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** 2 were at Riverton A. (and 4 more in Fremont Co. at McPaul) on 11 Mar (\*SJD)[record earliest], and 400 were there on 27 Mar (SJD).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** The first were 2 at Riverton A. on 6 Mar (SJD). The peaks were on 11 May with 345 in Fremont Co. (SJD) and 450 at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

**Dunlin:** 41 were at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD), and 51 were at Colo Ponds on 24 May (HZ).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** 53 were at Riverton A. on 17 May (SJD).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** 2 were at Moeckley Prairie on 11 May (AMJ), and 1 was n. of Bayard in Greene Co. on 26 May (RKM)[record latest].

**Ruff:** 1 n. of Bayard in Greene Co. on 26 May (\*RKM, \*MJ) will be the fourth state record if accepted by the Records Committee.

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** The first were 15 at Runnells W. A. on 2 May (AMJ, details). Many more were reported through 12 May with a peak of 300 at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD).

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** 8 in basic plumage were heard at Willow Sl. on 23 Mar (SJD)[ties record earliest]. Others were seen through April and early May with 16 still at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD, details).

**Common Snipe:** The peak was 49 at McCord Pond on 6 Apr, and the last was at Dunbar Sl. on 17 May (SJD).

**American Woodcock:** The first was on 7 Apr at Wexford in Allamakee Co. (FL). One displayed in Cherokee Co. on 17 May (DBi).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** 1 male was at Riverton A. on 28 Mar (\*SJD)[2nd earliest]. The peak was 170 at New L. on 30 Apr (SJD).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** Singles were at Moeckley Prairie on 15 May (EuA, EIA), at Colo Ponds on 21 May (HZ), and near Palo on 29 May (JLF, THK).

**Franklin's Gull:** The first was in Fremont Co. on 7 Mar (BKP). Peaks were 400 in Woodbury Co. on 18 Apr and 550 at IPL Ponds on 30 Apr (SJD).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** The first was at Saylorville Res. on 22 Mar (SJD), the peak was 377 at Montrose on 30 Mar (SJD), and the last were 4 at Ruthven sewage pond on 14 May (THK).

**Ring-billed Gull:** Birds moved in by early March and reached a peak of 50,000 at Saylorville Res. on 21 Mar (BE); 100 lingered at Spirit L. on 13 May (THK).

**Herring Gull:** Most moved through early. The most reported was 53 at Saylorville on 22 Mar, and 3 imm. lingered there on 17 May (SJD).

**Thayer's Gull:** 2 first-year birds were at Red Rock Res. on 14-15 Mar (\*AMJ, \*DCP).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** An adult in alternate plumage was at Sabula on 10 Mar (\*JLF) and another was photographed at Runnels W.A. on 31 Mar (PA, RA).

**Glaucous Gull:** 2 first-winter birds were at Saylorville Res. on 17 Mar (SJD).

**Caspian Tern:** The only reports were from Saylorville Res. area and Clear L. from 12 to 17 May.

**Common Tern:** 3 reports that included details were from Red Rock Res. on 2 May (SJD), Clinton Co. on 8 May (Brian Blevins fide PCP), and Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD).

**Forster's Tern:** The first were in Sioux Co. on 14 Apr (JV).

**Least Tern:** 1 returned to IPL Ponds on 21 May (BKP), and 2 were there on 29 May (EuA, EIA).

**Black Tern:** The peak was 200 in NW Iowa on 13 May (THK).

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** The first was on 5 May at Hickory Hill P. (DRP).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** The first was on 11 May in Linn Co. (PW).

**Burrowing Owl:** 1 in early Apr in Kossuth Co. was last found on 19 Apr (MCK). In Johnson Co., 1 appeared very briefly near the Greencastle airport on 8 Apr (\*JLF).

**Barred Owl:** An adult was feeding 2 fledglings on 30 Apr at Fairfield (CAA).

**Long-eared Owl:** Four reports were of 1 at Fairfield on 6 Mar (DCP), 1 at Kettleson Hogsback on 9 Mar (LAS), 2 near Algona to mid-April (MCK), and 1 in Cerro Gordo Co. on 17 Apr (KLP).

**Short-eared Owl:** Three reports of singles were from Badger Creek S.P. on 27 Mar (EuA, EIA), w. of Spencer on 14 Apr (LAS), and in Grundy Co. on 23 Apr (MPR).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** Three reports of singles were at Mason City on 8 Mar (RG), Coralville Res. on 30 Mar (JLF), and Ledges S.P. up to 4 Apr (SJD).

**Common Nighthawk:** The first was on 30 Apr in Van Buren Co. (SJD).

**Chuck-will's-widow:** 5 were at the usual location at Waubonsie S.P. on 11, 12 May (SJD, THK).

**Whip-poor-will:** 1 was singing in Boone Co. on 19 Apr (SJD).

**Chimney Swift:** The first was in Iowa City on 15 Apr (DRP).

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** The first was in Shimek F. in Lee Co. on 28 Apr (THK).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** The first arrived in Woodbury Co. on 10 Apr (BFH) and in Winneshiek Co. on 14 Apr (DC).

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Reports were from 30 Mar to 4 May, except for 1 at Decorah on 30 May (DC), which could be nesting.

**Pileated Woodpecker:** 1 was in Mason City on 5 Apr (CF, RGo).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** 6 reports of 1-3 birds were from 13 to 26 May.

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** The first was heard in NC Iowa at A. A. Call S.P. in Kossuth Co. on 4 May (MCK)[ties 2nd earliest]; the second was reported from SE Iowa at Fairfield on 8 May (DCP).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** 1-7 were reported from 6 locations from 18 to 28 May.

**Acadian Flycatcher:** In addition to the usual birds in SE Iowa, birds were heard at Macbride Nature Recreation A. on 25 May (THK) and A. A. Call S.P. on 26 May (MCK).

**Alder Flycatcher:** 1 was singing at Shimek F. in Lee Co. on 15 May (JLF, DRP)[ties 3rd earliest]. Others were reported from six locations to 28 May at Liscomb (BPR).

**Willow Flycatcher:** 1 on 13 May at Fairfield (DCP) was the only report.

**Least Flycatcher:** The first and last were at Hickory Hill P. on 4 and 14 May (DRP).

**Eastern Phoebe:** The first was in Van Buren Co. on 21 Mar (RLC). Birds first appeared at four other locations on 24-25 March.

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** The first was in Linn Co. on 1 May (PW).

**Western Kingbird:** The only birds away from the Missouri River valley were near Prairie City in Polk Co. on 21 and 27 May (JLF, JJD).

**Horned Lark:** An albino, all white except for a grey chest band, was at Fairfield on 8 Apr (DCP).

**Purple Martin:** The first was 1 on 21 Mar in Johnson Co. (DRP)[3rd earliest]; 1 on 12 Apr in Sioux Co. was early for NW Iowa (JV).

**Tree Swallow:** The first was 2 on 22 Mar at the Saylorville Res. (SJD); the peak was 1,200 at Cardinal M. on 1 May (DC).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** The first was on 15 Apr in NE Iowa at Decorah (DC).

**Bank Swallow:** The first were 2 on 20 Apr in Johnson Co. (DRP).

**Cliff Swallow:** The first were seen on 22 Apr over the Iowa R. in Johnson Co. (DRP).

**Barn Swallow:** The first was on 8 Apr at Lewis and Clark S.P. (AMJ).

**Blue Jay:** Large numbers were migrating through the Iowa City area on 10-13 May (DRP).

**Fish Crow:** A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

**Tufted Titmouse:** The only report was of 16 pairs in Van Buren Co. on 13 Apr (RLC).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Singles were at Iowa City on 30 Apr (JLF) and 5 May (DRP), and in Sioux Co. on 7 May (JV).

**Brown Creeper:** 1 was at Iowa City from 18-21 Apr (DRP).

**Carolina Wren:** Ten reports described a total of 17 birds, mostly in S and C Iowa. Noteworthy were 5 at the Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 28 Apr (THK, RIC, RT). Farthest north was 1 in Cerro Gordo Co. on 22 May (JLW).

**Bewick's Wren:** Reports were from 3 locations in S Iowa: 1-3 were at the Croton Unit of Shimek F. from 28 Apr-4 May (THK, RIC, RT, SJD, RLC), 1 was singing at Aspen Grove Cemetery in Burlington on 27 Apr (\*JLF), and 1 was at Shenandoah on 8 May (\*JBB).

**House Wren:** This species was early over the state, but 1 on 7 Apr at Davenport was especially so (Brian Blevins fide PCP)[ties record earliest].

**Winter Wren:** Up to 8 individuals were at the Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 31 Mar (THK, RIC). The last was 1 on 11 May at Credit Island in Davenport (PCP).

**Marsh Wren:** The first was 1 on 26 Apr at Otter Creek M. (JLF).

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** The first were 4 on 29 Mar in Marion Co. (JSi).

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** The first was 1 on 6 Apr in Iowa City (DRP). A peak of 80 was recorded at A. A. Call S.P. on 4 May (MCK). The last was 1 on 17 May at Dunbar Sl. (SJD).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** The first was 1 on 19 Apr at Wildcat Den S.P. (PCP). A peak of 28 was in Lee/Van Buren counties on 28 Apr (RLC).

**Veery:** The first was 1 on 5 May in Clay Co. (LAS).

**Swainson's Thrush:** The first was 1 on 29 Apr at Fairfield (DCP). Peaks were 23 at A. A. Call S.P. on 13 May (MCK) and 25 on 18 May at Cedar Falls (RLC). The last was 1 on 27 May in Sioux Co. (JV).

**Hermit Thrush:** The first was 1 on 3 Apr in Warren Co. (AMJ). The peak was in Clay Co. with 25 on 13 Apr (LAS). The last lingered into May with 1 at the Coralville Res on 4 May (\*THK) and 2 at A. A. Call S.P. on 7 May (MCK, no details).

**Wood Thrush:** The first was 1 on 2 May at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (JLF). A total of 8 were at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 11 May (DC), and 12 were singing at Matsell Bridge in Linn Co. on 21 May (PW).

**American Robin:** Migration in NW Iowa in late Feb was considered early (JV).

**Varied Thrush:** The only report (no details) was of a female in a Mason City backyard on 23 Mar (CF).

**Northern Mockingbird:** This species was widely reported with 10 observations of 12 birds, but all were from the southern half of the state.

**Brown Thrasher:** The first was 1 on 7 Apr at Cone M. (DRP).

**Water Pipit:** Only two reports: 12 at Riverton A. on 11 Mar (SJD) and 2 in Sioux Co. on 4 May (JV).

**Bohemian Waxwing:** 2 were at Cherokee on 24 Mar (DBi)[3rd latest].

**Northern Shrike:** Singles were at Hendrickson M. on 9 Mar (BPr, MPr, details) and 29 Mar (EIA, EuA), at Union Slough N.W.R. on 16 Mar (MCK), at Big Creek S.P. on 17 Mar (SJD, details), and at Willow Sl. on 23 Mar (SJD, details).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** The first in NW Iowa was on 5 Apr in Sioux Co. (JV). A nest in Johnson Co. had 3 young on 30 May (RJH).

**White-eyed Vireo:** This species was widespread in S Iowa, producing 13 reports of 22 birds. The first was 1 on 23 Apr at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (EIA, EuA). That location may have the greatest concentration for this species also, as 5 were there on 28 Apr (THK). The only report from N Iowa was a single at Sweet M. on 16 May (THK).

**Bell's Vireo:** The first was 1 on 10 May at Coralville Res. (JLF); 11 were in Woodbury Co. on 11 May (BFH).

**Solitary Vireo:** The first was 1 on 2 May at Effigy Mounds N.M. (DC). Peaks were on 8 May with 15 at A. A. Call S.P. (MCK) and 20 at Ledges S.P. (AMJ).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** The last was 1 on 19 May at Cedar Falls (DCP, details).

**Blue-winged Warbler:** There were 10 reports scattered across the state, with the first on 2 May at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (JLF). A Brewster's hybrid singing a blue-winged's song was at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 2 and 15 May in the same area where 1 was seen last spring (\*JLF). Another Brewster's was at Hickory Hill P. in Iowa City on 5 May (DRP, details).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** Eleven reports described 1-3 birds, with the first on 29 Apr at Lakin Sl. (EIA, EuA)[3rd earliest] and the last on 17 May at McCord Pond in Guthrie Co. (SJD).

**Tennessee Warbler:** The first was 1 on 25 Apr singing at Hickory Hill P. (JLF).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** The first was 1 on 20 Apr in Boone Co. (SJD).

**Nashville Warbler:** The peak was 19 at A. A. Call S.P. on 7 May (MCK).

**Northern Parula:** The first was 1 on 2 May at Wildcat Den S.P. (PCP). There were 5 in Cerro Gordo Co. on 20 May (JLW).

**Yellow Warbler:** The first was 1 on 28 Apr at Otter Creek M. (DRP).

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** One observer thought there were more than usual this spring (JRC). The last was 1 in Sioux Co. on 26 May (JV).

**Magnolia Warbler:** The peak was 15 on 20 May in Clay Co. (LAS).

**Cape May Warbler:** The first was 1 on 4 May in Johnson Co. (THK). The most popular bird was one seen at the I.O.U. meeting in Cedar Falls on 18-19 May (m.ob.). Others were singles at Little Wall L. on 8 May (MPR) and Sweet M. on 18 May (AMJ); 2 were at McCord Pond on 17 May (SJD).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** The only report was a male on 6 May at Union Grove S.P. (MPR)[ties 2nd earliest].

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** It would appear that marshes are the place to see this species, as the first were 2 on 7 Apr at Cone M.(DRP), the peak was 144 at Cardinal M. (DC), and the last was 1 on 17 May at Dunbar Sl. (SJD).

**Townsend's Warbler:** A singing male of this western species was at Stone P. in Sioux City on 11 May (\*BG). This would be a third state record.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** The first was 1 on 2 May in Polk Co. (PA, RA). A peak of 8 was at A. A. Call S.P. on 4 May (MCK). The last was on 17 May in Johnson Co. (DRP).

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** This species is an early migrant, but this year 2 were even earlier than usual: a singing male at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 5 Apr (RIC)[record earliest] and 1 at Ledges S.P. on 6 Apr (\*SJD)[2nd earliest]. Later, 5 were at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. and near Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 28 Apr (RIC, THK). Unusually far north were 2 at Trumbull L. in Clay Co. on 4 May (\*LAS). Singles were also seen at L. Ahquabi S.P. on 9 May (AMJ) and Fairfield on 14 May (DCP).

**Pine Warbler:** Singles were at Woodland Mounds Preserve in Warren Co. on 9 May (\*JSi), at Cedar Falls on 19 May (\*RIC), and at the Eldora Cemetery on 19 May (EIA, EuA).

**Palm Warbler:** The first were 12 on 26 Apr in Sioux Co. (JV).

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** Singles were reported from Waubonsie S.P. on 11 May (SJD), Polk Co. Greenbelt on 13 May (JRC), and Riverview Cemetery at Algona on 13 May (MCK).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** There were 11 reports, almost all of multiple birds. The peak was 20 in Clay Co. on 19 May (LAS). They were considered more common this year (THK).

**Cerulean Warbler:** The first were 2 on 28 Apr at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (RIC, THK); 5 were singing at their usual nesting area at Saylorville Res. on 18 May (BE), and 4 were at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 25 May (DC).

**Black-and-white Warbler:** A large number of 11 was at A. A. Call S.P. on 4 May (MCK); the last was 1 at Hickory Hill P. in Iowa City on 17 May (DRP).

**American Redstart:** 21 were at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 11 May (DC).

**Prothonotary Warbler:** The first was 1 on 9 May at Dudgeon L. (JLF). Others were singles at Riverton A. on 11 May (SJD) and 14 May (BKP), and 1 at the Saylorville Res. on 16 May (SJD).

**Worm-eating Warbler:** It was a banner year for this species with reports from 6 locations. The first were 2 on 28 Apr at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (RIC, THK); also in SE Iowa was 1 at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 15 May (JLF, DRP) and 1 at Davenport on 10 May (Brian Blevins fide PCP). Farther from its expected range was 1 at Grammer Grove P. in Marshall Co. on 15 May (MPR), and most unusual was 1 singing at A. A. Call S.P. on 13-14 May (MCK).

**Ovenbird:** 7 were singing in a 1-mile stretch on the west side of Saylorville Res. on 18 May (BE).

**Northern Waterthrush:** The peaks were 5 at Pilot Knob S.P. on 6 May (DC) and Effigy Mounds N.M. on 9 May (DC).

- Louisiana Waterthrush:** A very early bird on 30 Mar was at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (SJD)[record earliest]; 3 were at Ledges S.P. on 12 May (MPR).
- Kentucky Warbler:** The first were 2 on 2 May at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (JLF) and 2 at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (JLF). Six other reports of single birds were scattered, with 1 in Woodbury Co. on 11 May notable because of its NW Iowa location (BFH).
- Connecticut Warbler:** This secretive late migrant is being seen more often in the state. There were 9 reports from throughout, with the first on 10 May at Davenport (Brian Blevins fide PCP) and the last 2 on 24 May at Hickory Hill P. in Iowa City (JLF). Details were provided for singles at Grammer Grove P. on 11 May (BPr, MPr) and Fin and Feather L. in Cerro Gordo Co. on 15 May (JLW).
- Mourning Warbler:** 2 on 4 May at A. A. Call S.P. were unusually early (MCK details)[ties record earliest]. The peak was 4 in Mahaska Co. on 19 May (RLC), and the last was on 30 May in Fremont Co. (BKP). One observer considers them uncommon in NW Iowa, so 1 in Sioux Co. on 26 May is notable (JV).
- Common Yellowthroat:** The first were singles on 28 Apr at Otter Creek M. (DRP) and in Clarke Co. (AMJ).
- Hooded Warbler:** A singing male was at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 28 Apr (THK, RIC) where it was seen through 25 May (m.ob.). Others were a female at Shenandoah on 10 May (JBB), 1 at Holst F. in Boone Co. on 15 May (RKM), and 1 at A. A. Call S.P. on 21 May (MCK).
- Wilson's Warbler:** The peak was 6 on 13 May at Hickory Hill P. (DRP), and the last was 1 on 25 May in Polk Co. (JRC).
- Canada Warbler:** The first was 1 on 10 May at Dudgeon L. (THK); the peak was 12 on 20 May in Sioux Co. (JV); and the last was 1 on 27 May at Hickory Hill P. (DRP).
- Yellow-breasted Chat:** An early bird was at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 28 Apr (THK, RIC)[ties record earliest]. Others were 1 at Cone M. on 5 May (THK) and 3 there on 20 May (JLF), 1 or 2 at Hickory Hill P. from 5 May through 29 May (JLF, DRP), 1 at Manti Woods on 11 May (SJD), and 1 at Matsell Bridge in Linn Co. on 11 May (PW).
- Summer Tanager:** Reports from regular locations included 2 at Waubonsie S.P. on 11 May (SJD) and 1 at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 15 May (JLF, DRP). Other singles were at Lamb's Grove on 11 May (GJB), at Stone S.P. on 11 May (BFH), and at Big Creek S.P. on 12 May (\*MPR).
- Scarlet Tanager:** The first was 1 on 2 May at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (JLF). A female was seen carrying nesting material at A. A. Call S.P. on 26 May (MCK).
- Western Tanager:** A male in alternate plumage was photographed at Red Rock Res. on 7 May (TS-photo, \*AMJ, \*JLF).
- Northern Cardinal:** A male singing in Sioux Center was considered unusual in NW Iowa away from the major river valleys (JV).
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** The first were single birds on 28 Apr at Amana Woods (DRP) and at a feeder in West Des Moines (JRC). The peak was 10 at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 11 May (DC).
- Blue Grosbeak:** The first was on 11 May in Fremont Co. (SJD). Other singles were near Forney L. on 13 May (THK), near Croton in Lee Co. on 15 May (JLF, DRP), in a West Des Moines backyard on 15 May (PA, RA, details), in Sioux Co. on 20 May (JV), and in O'Brien Co. on 24 May (DCH).
- Indigo Bunting:** The first was 1 on 28 Apr at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (THK).
- Dickcissel:** The first was a singing male on 2 May in Lee Co. (JLF).
- Rufous-sided Towhee:** There were 4 on 31 Mar at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (THK). A bird of the spotted race was in a West Des Moines backyard on 3 May (PA, RA).
- American Tree Sparrow:** If the record late reports are an indication, this species must have enjoyed the late spring weather: 1 was at Brown's L. in Woodbury Co. on 14 May (BFH, details)[2nd latest], and 1 was at Sweet M. on 18 May (\*AMJ)[record latest].
- Chipping Sparrow:** This species arrived earlier than usual. The first was 1 on 30 Mar in Lee Co. (SJD, details)[2nd earliest]. On 1 Apr, 2 were in Allamakee Co. (DC) and 1 was in Johnson Co. (JLF)[ties 3rd earliest].
- Clay-colored Sparrow:** This species was widely reported during its narrow migration window. The first was on 24 Apr at Ames (JJD). The peak was 52 at Brown's L. on 5 May (BE).
- Field Sparrow:** The first were 2 on 26 Mar at Big Creek S.P. (SJD).
- Vesper Sparrow:** The first was 1 on 16 Mar at Riverton A. (SJD, details).
- Lark Sparrow:** Quite early were 2 on 20 Apr in Warren Co. (AMJ)[3rd earliest]; 2 were in W Sioux Co. where they are considered uncommon on 20 May (JV).
- Grasshopper Sparrow:** The first was on 24 Apr in Johnson Co. (JLF).

- Le Conte's Sparrow:** Early were 1 or 2 on 30-31 Mar at Cone M. (PW, THK, JLF)[ties 3rd earliest]; 2 were at Brenton Sl. in Dallas Co. on 14 Apr (JSi), and 3 were at Lakin Sl. on 13 May (THK).
- Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** 1 was at Zirbel Sl. on 15 May (THK), and 1 was at Snake Creek M. on 26 May (RKM).
- Fox Sparrow:** The first was 1 on 10 Mar at Bays Branch (SJD).
- Lincoln's Sparrow:** The first was 1 on 14 Apr at Sioux Center (JV), and the last was 1 on 17 May at Ledges S.P. (SJD).
- White-throated Sparrow:** The peak was 500 in a woodlot in O'Brien Co. on 30 Apr (JV).
- Harris' Sparrow:** The only report was of 2 in Warren Co. on 10 May (AMJ).
- Dark-eyed Junco:** The last was 1 on 4 May in an Iowa City yard (THK).
- Lapland Longspur:** A flock of 2,000 was in Fremont Co. on 15 Mar (SJD). Other reports were 250 near Colo on 16 Mar (HZ), 1,000 in Grundy Co. on 24 Mar (BPr, MPr), and 15 near Cone M. on 7 Apr (AMJ, DRP).
- Smith's Longspur:** A flock of 30-50 was in the usual location near Cone M. from 25 Mar to 7 Apr (PW, JLF, AMJ); 100 were n. of Lone Tree on 30 Mar (THK).
- Snow Bunting:** A male in breeding plumage was at Cardinal M. on 21 Mar (DC).
- Yellow-headed Blackbird:** The first was a male on 21 Mar near Ames (Bret Giesler fide JJD, details); 30 in Adams Co. on 17 Apr were thought to be in an unexpected location (AMJ).
- Rusty Blackbird:** Peaks were 200 on 6 Mar in Kossuth Co. (MCK) and 225 at Long Pond in Guthrie Co. on 22 Mar (SJD).
- Brewer's Blackbird:** A female on 16 Mar at Riverton A. was described (SJD, details). Other reports were 25 on 30 Mar at Cone M. (PW), and 6 in Kossuth Co. on 21 Apr (MCK).
- Great-tailed Grackle:** They arrived early this year with 2 near Missouri Valley on 30 Mar (BFH)[record earliest] and 1 at Lakin Sl. on 6 Apr (SJD)[3rd earliest]. Up to 4 birds were seen at Lakin Sl. through 19 May. (m.ob.). Other reports were 3 at Riverton A. on 14 May (BKP), 6 pairs at Goose L. in Greene Co. on 17 May (SJD), and a male at Dunbar Sl in Greene Co. on 17 May (JSi).
- Brown-headed Cowbird:** The first for Sioux Co. was on 27 Mar (JV).
- Orchard Oriole:** The first was 1 on 28 Apr in Johnson Co. (JLF). This species is more common in the west, as 13 were in Fremont Co. on 11 May, (SJD), and 10 were there on 13 May (THK); 10 were in Sioux Co. on 20 May (JV). A male with nesting material was in Jefferson Co. on 16 May (CAA).
- Northern Oriole:** The first was on 25 Apr at Sioux Center (JV).
- Purple Finch:** The last were 2 on 4 May at Fairfield (DCP).
- House Finch:** They were described as still increasing in Sioux Co. (JV) and common to abundant at Ames (JJD).
- Red Crossbill:** There were 12 at a Cherokee feeder on 20 Apr, and 2 were still there on 22 May (DBi).
- White-winged Crossbill:** The only report was 1 at a Mason City feeder on 4 Mar (RGo).
- Common Redpoll:** The only report was 1 at Spencer on 2 Mar (LAS).
- Pine Siskin:** A number were on the ISU campus in Ames through mid Apr (JJD), 1 was at a West Des Moines feeder on 19 Apr, and 200 were in Aspen Grove Cemetery in Burlington on 27 Apr (JLF). Singles were at an Algona feeder on 8 May (MCK) and in a West Des Moines backyard on 14 May (PA, RA). The last was 1 on 19 May in Davenport (PCP).
- Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** Some of the birds from the winter enclave n. of Burlington were still present this spring; 1-2 were seen on 28 Apr and 11 May (THK).

## CONTRIBUTORS

\* = documentation only

Pam Allen/Reid Allen (PA/RA), West Des Moines; Carol A. Alexander (CAA), Fairfield; Eugene Armstrong/Eloise Armstrong (EuA/EIA), Booneville; Matt Baumann (Iowa Falls); Dick Bierman (DBi), Cherokee; Jean B. Braley (JBB), Shenandoah; Gordon J. Brand (GJB), Newton; \*Tanya E. Bray (TEB), Omaha, NE; \*Tim Brush (Muscataine); Dennis Carter (DC), Decorah; Robert I. Cecil (RIC), Des Moines; Jane R. Clark (JRC), Clive; Raymond L. Cummins (RLC), Centerville; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; Stephen S. Dinsmore (SJD), Ames; Bery Engebretsen (BE), Des Moines; Carolyn Fisher (CF), Mason City; James L. Fuller

(JLF), Iowa City; \*Bill Garthright (BG), Sioux City; Rita Goranson (RGo), Mason City; \*Janet Greer (JG), Council Bluffs; Douglas C. Harr (DCH), Larchwood; Richard J. Hollis (RJH), Iowa City; Bill F. Huser (BFH), Sioux City; \*Maridel Jackson (MJ), Ankeny; Ann M. Johnson (AMJ), Norwalk; Matthew C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; Sharon R. Laub (SRL), Rippey; Fred Leshner (FL), La Crosse, WI; Robert K. Myers (RKM), Perry; Babs K. Padelford/Loren J. Padelford (BKP/LJP), Bellevue, NE; Peter C. Petersen (PCP), Davenport; D. Randy Pinkston (DRP), Iowa City; Kim L. Pinneke (KLP), Mason City; Diane C. Porter (DCP), Fairfield; \*Jerry F. Probst (JFP), Sioux City; Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Liscomb; Mark Proescholdt (MPr), Liscomb; \*Tim Schantz (TS), Knoxville; \*Dick Schmitz (DS), Ames; Lee A. Schoenewe (LAS), Spencer; \*W. Ross Silcock, (WRS), Tabor; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; Richard Tetrault (RT), Iowa City; Jerry Tod (Carter Lake); John Van Dyk (JV), Sioux Center; Jan L. Walter (JLW), Mason City; Pete Wickham (PW), Cedar Rapids; and Hank Zalatel (HZ), Colo.

## COMMENT

The database for the spring report included 1,334 records from 43 contributors and 9 others who sent documentations only. There were 65 documentations involving 36 species. There were a surprising number of new early and late dates, perhaps because several observers continue to look for them in appropriate places.

There were a number of new contributors, and the increased coverage of northern and western Iowa was particularly noteworthy. More rare birds than ever were reported this spring, and most were well documented. Some rarities reported to the I.O.U. Birdline, however, were not reported upon further and will be lost to the record books. These include sightings of at least six accidental species and ten other rare species. One bird was photographed but not documented (Lesser Black-backed Gull); some may not consider the photograph diagnostic without description of the leg color.

Several reports of birds that would be record early or late dates and for which no details or documentation were provided were left out of this report because of the possibility of confusion with another species. Most contributors recognized unusual dates and provided details or documentation.

Most contributors provided adequate information, but some omitted details, such as their name and address, from their report or documentations.

In this report we only cited the individuals who contributed the report, not the others who were present.

*211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA, 52246, 6 Longview Knoll, RR #6, Iowa City, IA 52240, and 845 Cypress Ct., Iowa City, IA 52245*

## RED-TAILED HAWK KETTLE OVER ALGONA

MATT C. KENNE



At 11:15 a.m. on 26 March 1991, I saw a buteo gliding downwind with a 10-15 mph tailwind over downtown Algona. Ahead of the bird was a line of several other hawks, leading to a flock of about 45 buteos swirling overhead in classic kettling behavior.

I momentarily thought Broad-winged Hawk but quickly discarded that tentative identification because of the early date. With my binoculars I could also pick out various combinations of Red-tailed Hawk field marks on almost every bird. Searching for hawks that didn't fit the profile, I found two dark-phase red-tails, one soaring Cooper's Hawk, and a lone adult Bald Eagle bringing up the rear some distance behind.

The flock was looser than a Broad-winged kettle, with individual birds making slower, wider turns. I counted 55 Red-tailed Hawks as they drifted away from me. The entire flock climbed rapidly on a thermal and soon disappeared into the low broken cloud cover.

Pairs and trios of red-tails sometimes soar together and I have seen four or five on the same thermal for short periods (albeit at different altitudes), but I know of no records comparable to this kettle for Iowa. Dunn, Sibley, and Sutton (Hawks in Flight, Houghton Mifflin, 1988) describe kettles of hawks other than Broad-winged Hawks at regular hawk-watch sites as exceptional. I find the Des Moines River where it passes through Algona a fine spot for watching migrating raptors but that day's flight of Red-tailed Hawks was extraordinary.

*709 North Phillips, Algona, IA 50511*

## I.O.U. BUSINESS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

*30 March 1991 Ames, 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.*

Members present: Dinsmore (presiding), Allen, Armstrong, Cecil, Hollis, Porter, Proescholdt, Thompson, Barker (guest).

#### Reports

The minutes of the 3 November 1990 meeting were approved as circulated (motion Hollis, second Thompson).

Treasurers Report: Allen reported that as of 31 December 1990, the I.O.U. had a balance of \$30,215.4.

This included \$23,000 in two C.D.'s and the balance in the checking account. A detailed report will be presented to the membership in May and published in a later issue of Iowa Bird Life. Allen reported that she had purchased \$10,000 in bonding for the office at a cost of \$85 for three years.

Records: The committee is working on 1990 records and when finished with them, will be publishing a revised checklist of Iowa birds. The committee nominated Ray Cummins for a full 6-year term starting after the spring meeting. The board approved this nomination (motion Allen, second Thompson).

Publications: Dinsmore reported on costs of Iowa Bird Life. Volume 60 cost \$3,767.62 with production expenses making of most of that (\$3,424.29). He estimated costs for 1991 of \$4,100.

Education: Hollis reported that the education booklet is progressing and that they expect it to be finished in 1991.

Membership: Copies of the new membership brochure were distributed. These were prepared in late 1990 at a cost of \$145 for 2000 copies.

Breeding Bird Atlas: Thompson reported that data editing and entry on the atlas cards is progressing well. Much of this should be done this spring and then detailed maps and data analysis can begin.

Big Day: An announcement of this activity will appear in the next newsletter.

#### **Old Business**

Hollis arranged for the purchase of 250 I.O.U. pins which he had available for purchase. A motion to set the price of pins at \$5 each (motion Porter, Hollis second) was passed.

Thompson reported on progress in building a traveling display for the I.O.U. The basic stand is complete and the entire display should be complete by the spring meeting. Expenses to date are \$156.

#### **New Business**

Cecil reported on plans for the spring meeting in Waterloo. Both the local arrangements (headed by Francis Moore) and the program (Cecil) are set. The fall 1991 meeting tentatively is set for Indianola on 13-15 September. A local committee has made some plans for field trips and activities. This meeting selection needs to be approved by the membership. Hollis and Thompson reported that the Cedar Rapids Audubon Society is interested in hosting the spring 1992 meeting. Dinsmore will contact them to try to get a date and location set. Several potential future meeting sites were discussed including southeastern Iowa, the Shenandoah area, and northeastern Iowa.

Possible I.O.U. field trips were discussed. There was some interest in having a summer trip to Shimek State Forest (Cecil) and Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge (Armstrong). These will be discussed at the spring meeting.

The I.O.U. budget for 1991 was discussed at length. A final budget indicating anticipated income of \$9,905 and anticipated expenses of \$7,850 was approved (motion Allen, second Thompson). The dues schedule for 1992 was discussed; it was agreed to keep the dues the same as in 1991 (motion Hollis, Porter second).

Allen asked for input on what to do with two C.D.s that come up for renewal in late June. It was decided to renew a \$20,000 C.D. for 12 months and a \$3,000 C.D. for 3 months.

The question of how to deal with memberships that are received in mid or late year was discussed. It decided that any memberships received before the third issue of the year of Iowa Bird Life had been mailed would be treated as memberships for that calendar year with the individual being sent back issues of the journal and newsletter. Memberships received after the third issue is sent will be sent a complimentary copy of issue number 4 and a welcome letter but their membership will start with the next calendar year (motion Porter, Hollis second). In a related issue, it was decided that members who have not renewed their membership after receiving a second dues notice will be sent the first issue of Iowa Bird Life in the next calendar year and then dropped if they have not renewed (motion Hollis, Cecil second).



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